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ENTITULED,

A C A V E A T

A G A I N S T T H E

New Sect of Anabaptists,

Lately sprung up at E X O N.

In a L E T T E R to a Friend. R

By B E N J A M I N R E E D, formerly
Educated in a private *Academy* near London,
and now a Commoner of *Baliol College*, Oxon.

I own, with Tertullian, Custom against Truth is Heresy.
Cavear. p. 6.

—Those whom *CHRIST* hath promised to be with, in the
Administration of Baptism, are such, as are Commis-
sioned by him to Preach the Gospel, and Teach all Na-
tions, as well as to Baptize. This evidently appears to
him that consults Mat. 28. 19.

Mr. *Withers's* Def. of the True and Impar. Account, &c. p. 44.

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S I R,

YOU have, I presume, heard of the Noise the CAVEAT hath made in *London*, and about this *City* and *Country*; and therefore I need not blot any Paper in describing it; But shall, without a large Introduction, endeavour to make a few plain Remarks on that Performance: Telling you first of all, that I have very good Evidence, the *Author* of it, is Mr. *John Withers*; who most People know, has been engaged for some Years in Controversy with Mr. *Agate*. I do not think it worth the while, to animadvert much upon his *sly* and *poor* Innuendo's, in relation to me and the Persons who were concern'd in my Baptism. I may *dare say* (because I know it to be true) that I could never, after the strictest Examination, discover this *worldly Principle*; which is, with so much Assurance, said to have carried me off from the *Dissenters*. I might offer many Reasons to shew, why probably I had not, and could not, have such a View; *but* since the *World* is so very uncharitable, and he's afraid, I shall find it a little difficult to persuade Persons to the contrary, it will be a wiser part, to sit down content, with a more silent, but greater, Applause. I suppose you have observ'd under what Character I am always mention'd, and for what Reasons. If I had not been represented as an easy, simple Fellow, and my Witnesses as the Contrivers of this (which he calls) *scandalous Novelty*; he could not have flourish'd so well in the Beginning, nor so frequently have interlarded and concluded most of his Paragraphs, with biting *Invectives*, and *scurrilous Jest*s. Allow me to be as weak, as he would have me reputed, yet, I declare, that if I was seduc'd, I had no other Tempters, than the Suggestions of a few Books, which my Weakness fondly embrac'd. The Matter I thought reasonable, and of Moment; and therefore, I apply'd my Self heartily to the weighing of it. My Resolution you need not be told: and, I believe, you will

not Startle at my Saying, that I never once repented it. I shall now proceed to my Remarks: And I hope to shew, that the Persons concern'd in this case, deserve a little better Language, than Mr. *Withers* hath us'd towards them.

HE asserts, That renouncing Presbyterian Baptism is inconsistent with their own Prayers, contrary to the Sense of the whole Christian World; and renders the Christianity of the Members of their own Church, precarious. And, to introduce his Essay, he premises, That in the Sense of the Church of England, Baptism is that Sacred Rite, by which persons are Initiated into the Christian Church. Which he shews from the 27th Article, and the Words which the Minister directs to the People in the publick Office of Baptism, both for Infants, and Persons of riper Years: A plain Intimation (says he) that hitherto he is look'd upon as one out of the Church.

'TIS true, that Baptism is an Initiating Rite; and that, in the Apprehension of the Church of England, no one can be admitted and made a Member of Christ's mystical Body, or a Christian in a perfect, proper Sense, without it. But still we may say, that a Person out of the Church may be safe, provided he doth not obstinately refuse to come into it, when he may. If he has been diligent, serious, and sincere, in his Examination, we have no reason to despair of him, tho' he should allow Baptism by any Hand; since his Determination springs, not from a Contempt of CHRIST's Institution, but an Ignorance, which he cannot Conquer. And farther, a Person when he first believes the Christian Religion, is a Christian, tho' he hath not the Name, and visible Priviledges of such, till after Baptism. And hence those *Catechumens*, and Candidates for Baptism, who died for the Cause of Christ, were never deny'd the Honour of being *Martyrs*; For a *Martyr*, ever since Christianity appear'd, signify'd one, who Testify'd and Profess'd his Faith in the Christian Religion to the Death: And cannot see any Absurdity in saying, that he, who believ'd in Christ, and dy'd for his Faith, though he was not baptiz'd into it, might not only be a good Man, but a *Martyr*. This plain Account makes it appear, that unbaptiz'd Persons are not in the same Class with *Turks*, *Infidels*, and *Pagans*. To which we may add, our Saviour's Word in the Commission: Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing

them, &c. Mat. 28. 19. according to the Greek, *go ye and
 disciple all Nations, &c.* by which Expression, compar'd with
 the Practice of the *Apostles*, we are inform'd, that they
 were Converted to the Christian *Faith*, and made a Pro-
 fession of it, before Baptism was administred to them. They
 came out from the *Heathens*, confessing their Sins; and
 threw themselves under the Care of the *Church*, professing
 their *Faith*, before they were qualified for Baptism. And
 how could Persons, who had left the *Society, Errors* and
Practices of the *Heathens*, and were sincerely converted to
 the Christian Religion; I say, how could such be *Infidels*,
Pagans, or *any thing* but *Christians*? But perhaps he only
 means, that they are *Pagans*, as they no have Right to the Co-
 venanted Mercy of *GOD*. To this I say, that tho' unbaptiz'd
 Persons have not the *Sign, Seal* and *Pledge* of *GOD's* Fa-
 vour, which *Baptism* is to all who rightly receive it; yet
 they have a *Promise* which may safely be depended upon:
For GOD so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten
Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have
everlasting Life, St. John 3. 16. However, it is said,
St. Mark 16. 16. He that believeth, and is baptiz'd, shall be
sav'd; but we must add the last Words too, He that be-
lieveth not, shall be damn'd—. These two Texts may seem
 to clash; the one affirming, that *whosoever believes*; the
 other, that *whosoever believeth, and is baptiz'd, shall be*
saved. But this Remark, I believe, will clear the Matter,
 namely, that a *true Faith* is *absolutely necessary* to all who
 receive the Gospel, (no pretence being to be made for not
 believing, and the believing otherwise, than he has re-
 veal'd, being a fastening of Absurdities upon the Author
 of Truth and Perfection) while Baptism (being but a po-
 sitive Institution, neither good nor bad, antecedent to
 the Command) is only *necessary* to those, who have the
 Opportunity to receive it; there being no such Evil in the
 not receiving it, as in the not believing the Gospel in the
 true Sense and Meaning of it. And 'tis remarkable, that
 tho' in the former part of the 16th Verse, of the 16th Ch.
 of *St. Mark*, 'tis said, *He that believeth and is baptiz'd, shall*
be saved— yet in the latter part 'tis only said, *He that be-*
lieveth not, shall be damn'd: Plainly intimating, that the
 want

want of *Faith*, and not the want of *Baptism*, shall damn. And that you may not want the best Evidence I can think of at present, I shall refer you to these following Places; *St. John's Gospel*, Chap. 3. 17, 18. Chap. 5. 24. Chap. 6. 40, 47. Chap. 20. 31. All which places do plainly and undeniably shew the absolute Necessity of *Faith* in Christ Jesus, or an hearty Belief of the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Religion, to all those who are favoured with the glad News of the Gospel. I have said thus much, not to undervalue the two positive Institutions of our Saviour, nor to encourage the Neglect of them, but to prove that a Man who never had the Opportunity, or was afraid, upon an invincible Scruple, or false Principle, to receive either, might still, upon a true Faith, be entitled to the chiefest Promise of the Christian Covenant.

SECTION I. Our Author comes now to represent the desperate Tendency of that Doctrine, which these Sectaries have endeavour'd to obtrude upon the World. He saith at the Beginning, That the annulling all Baptisms perform'd by a Presbyterian Minister, is a thing directly contrary to the Practice and Opinion of the Catholick Church. And at the Conclusion, we are told, That the Sense and Practice of all the Churches upon the Face of the Earth, must be a mighty Prejudice against the Opinion of this upstart Sect. By Catholick Church and all the Churches, Mr. Wilters can only, according to his own Scheme, mean the Reform'd, who have a Presbyterian Government: And certainly they do not, and will not dispute Presbyterian Baptism, who have no other. But I fancy, the Opinion and Practice of those Churches (which are no more than an Hand to the whole Body) cannot be a mighty Prejudice against us. For the Churches of Italy, Spain entire, with the Popish part of Germany, France, Poland, and Hungary, are Episcopal. To which we may add, the vast EMPIRE of Russia, (which is greater in Extent, than all the Popish Countries now nam'd) and those parts of the Reform'd that are Episcopal. Let us add also to them, the whole Greek CHURCH, the Armenians, Georgians, Mingrelians, Jacobites, the Christians of St. Thomas and St. John, in the East-Indies, and other Eastern Churches. The African
too,

too, the *Cophites* in *Egypt*, and great *Empire* of the *Abyssines* in *Ethiopia*; all which are *Episcopal*, and never own'd the Supremacy of *ROME*. Now, tho' all those Churches which are subject to *Rome*, not only allow, but command *Lay-Mens* and *Midwives* Baptism; and tho' all the others which are not subject to *Rome*, should be prov'd to do the same; yet their Sense and Practice is only a Prejudice against us upon the Score of renouncing *Lay-Baptism*. And since there are no *Presbyterian* Ministers, nor Men that pretend to the *Priest's* Office without *Episcopal* Ordination in most of those Churches; with what Honesty could it be said, that annulling all Baptisms perform'd by a *Presbyterian Minister*, is directly contrary to the Practice and Opinion of the *Catholick Church*? Is not this an Insinuation, that all, or most of the Churches are govern'd by *Presbyters*? And do not such little tricking Words, confirm the Generality of Dissenters in their old instill'd Notion, that Bishops are part of the *Romish* Corruptions; and that they are only to be found in Countries which are *Slaves* to, or *Admirers* of the *Whore of Babylon*?

BUT to pass on: Mr. *Bingham* saith, That the *Greek* and *Muscovite* Churches allow Baptism by a *Lay-man* or *Woman*, in the Case of extream Necessity: And, to this purpose, he produceth many Writers, two of which, are *Dr. Smith* and *Arcudius*. Now *Dr. Smith*, in the 109th Page of his Account of the *Greek Church*, tells us, That they believe such an absolute Necessity of this Sacrament—as that they entertain **HARD AND CRUEL THOUGHTS** of the State of *Infants*, who are by some Misfortune depriv'd of it: To prevent which Mischiefe, it is allow'd to *Lay-Persons* of either Sex, to baptize, in Case of **REAL AND CERTAIN DANGER** of imminent Death, in the Absence of a *Priest*, &c. From which you see, that such a Baptism is only allow'd in case of a very dangerous Sicknes; and consequently, if it should be administer'd to one in Health, it would be look'd upon invalid, as being unauthoriz'd. But farther you see, that this Allowance is founded upon an Opinion absurd and impious, and confess'd to be so by all *Protestants* in general; and therefore a *Protestant Dissenter*, one would think, should never have objected the Sense and Practice of those

those Churches (which in this Particular are *Popish*) against us. But however, this Charge may not hold against all the *Greek Churches*; and I have only remark'd, upon the Supposition of *their* allowing *Lay-mens* and *Womens* Baptism in Cases of Necessity. But to make the contrary appear; *Arcudius*, a *Romish* Priest, who design'd, by his Book, to make the World believe, that the *Eastern Churches* agreed with the *Roman*; yet freely owns, that 'for the most part all *Gracia*, *Russia*, *Muscovia*, and other 'Provinces, who after the manner of the *Greek Church*, continue in the Faith of Christ, when a Priest is absent, had 'rather suffer their Infants to die without Baptism, than 'suffer them to be baptiz'd by any other; because they think 'that it is not lawful, *even in Necessity*, for *Laicks* to execute 'this Office." This Author imputes their Judgment in this Case, to *Ignorance*, and calls them *erroneous* for it; but yet, you see, he owns the Matter of Fact, that such is their Faith and Practice.

BUT now the Question is, How can Dr. *Smith's* and this Author's Account agree? Very well; since what Dr. *Smith* saith, seems to be apply'd mostly to *those parts* of the *Greek Church*, which are Tributaries to the *Turks*: For in his Preface, he shews how *Cyrillus Lucaris*, Patriarch of *Constantinople*, 1621, got to himself the Hatred and Ill Will of the *Latinizing Greeks*, by opposing the Designs of the *Jesuits*: And from Page 239, and forward of his Book, he shews, how by the Instigation of the *Jesuits*, and Conspiracy of some *Greek Bishops*, he was prosecuted, dethron'd, banish'd, and at last barbarously murder'd, in the Year 1638. In Page 249, he tells us, how the *Romish Emissaries* and *Latinizing Greeks* bribe the *Turks* to get their own Party-men advanc'd to the Patriarchate, and how the *Romish Ambassadors* as well as *Romish Priests* disturb and rend that poor distress'd Church, by corrupting the *Greek Bishops*. Sir. *Paul Rycant* in his Present-State of the *Greek* and *Armenian Churches*, as well as Dr. *Smith*, gives a full, and plain Account, how the Church of *Rome* has, by various Methods, impos'd upon *those parts* of the *Greek Church*. And in the 447th Page, he assures us, That some Friars of the *Roman Church* perswaded the *Armenian Patriarch* and Bishops

at

at *Constantinople*, to subscribe a Confession agreeable to the Tenets of the *Roman Faith*— A Copy of which, *he himself* saw and read, as it was deliver'd to him by the *Armenian Bishop*. From which it appears, that *Rome* is busy with those Parts of the *Greek Church*: And consequently, since *Arcudius* confesses, That for the most part all *Græcia*, *Muscovia*, *Russia*, and other Provinces, do not allow *Lay-Baptism* in any Necessity; we have reason to look upon these Churches as purer in their Faith, Worship, and Practice too, than the others. For these *Historians* assure us, that they, who have allow'd the Baptisms of *Lay-men* and *Women*, have also admitted Articles of Faith drawn up by *Romish Hands*. And is it not a mighty Reputation to those who deny *Lay-Baptism*, to have such Precedents, as almost all *Græcia*, *Russia*, *Muscovy*, and other Provinces? And is it not a Discredit to those who plead for *Lay-Baptism*, to have the *Roman Churches*, and those seduc'd by them, Precedents for it? I only endeavour in this, to mimick the Humour of those, who always glory, and speak terrible, when the greater Number joins them. But it may be said, that what I have quoted of these *Authors*, I took from the *Second Part of Lay-Baptism* invalid; and there being now an Answer to it, 'tis worth nothing. I own, having not the *Historians* by me, I took his Account, and think it worth my Notice, notwithstanding the Answer. I have examin'd and compar'd the fourth Chapter of the *Appendix to Mr. Bingham's Second Part of the Scholastical History of Lay-Baptism*; but cannot see an Answer in it, to what I have taken from *Mr. Lawrence's Second Part*. For allowing what is said of *Nicephorus*, to be the Sense and Practice of that Church, in which he presided; yet it will not follow, that all the *Greek Churches* had the same Sense and Practice too. And since *Mr. Bingham* has not disprov'd, nor so much as touch'd upon *Mr. Lawrence's* Quotation from *Arcudius*, we may still maintain, that the greatest part of *Græcia*, *Russia*, *Muscovia*, and other Provinces, are of our Opinion. And now, it will not be improper to observe, that, in several Synods of the *French Protestant Church*, Baptism, by an *unordain'd Person*, has been affirm'd to be wholly null and void.

A National Synod, held at *Poitiers*, in the Year 1560, (*Quick's Synodicon*, Vol. I. Cap. 6. Art. 11. pag. 18.) saith,
 "What is to be done, in case a Child has been baptiz'd by a
 "PRIVATE PERSON? It's answer'd, That to avoid
 "the SCANDAL given and taken, there shall be Ser-
 "mons preach'd for the better Information of the People,
 "who shall be also acquainted with the NULLITY of
 "such a Baptism: And that this may be imprinted upon
 "their Hearts, the Child shall be brought publickly into
 "the Church, there to receive the true Baptism".

IN the Acts of the Synod of the *French Reform'd* at
Lions, 1563, (p. 50.) we find this Article, "We Ministers
 "and Doctors in the Church of *Geneva*, accompany'd with
 "our Brethren, come from the National Synod of *Lyons*,
 "being met together in the Name of God, after we had
 "heard that Case of Conscience propounded to us, *Whe-*
 "*ther Baptism administred by private Persons without Office in*
 "*the Church of God, ought to be reiterated or not?* Did una-
 "nimonously declare this our Judgment, that such a Bap-
 "tism did not in any wise agree with the Institution of
 "our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and therefore consequently is of
 "no Force, Power, Validity, or Effect; and that the
 "Child ought to be brought into the Church of God,
 "there to be baptiz'd: For to separate the Ministrations
 "of the Sacraments from the Pastor's Office; 'tis as if one
 "should tear out a Seal to make use of it, without the
 "Commission, or Letters Patents, to which it was affix'd.
 "And in this Case we must practice that Rule of our
 "Lord; *What God hath joyn'd together, let no Man put*
 "*asunder.* This for and in the Name of all the As-
 "sembly".

John Calvin.

MR. Bingham, in his 74th Page of the *Appendix to the*
Second Part of his Scholaistical History of Lay-Baptism, says,
 that Calvin allow'd it in some Cases: And to this Purpose,
 Calvin's Words, as cited by Arch-Bp. *Whigist*, and part
 of one of his Epistles, are produc'd: The Sum of all which
 is this, That in his Opinion, in the State of the Church's Confu-
 sion and Persecution, Baptism by any Hand with the right

Form, was valid; but, that now the Reformation was settled, all such Baptisms were to be repeated. The false Principle that gave Rise to this Opinion, I need say nothing of again; but allowing all that Mr. Bingham hath said, yet still the Article is exprefs for a lawful Administrator, to make a Baptism valid, in the orderly State of the Church.

I shall only add (instead of the many I might) the third Synod of *Rochel*, which was the 18th National Synod, in the Year 1607, (Vol. I. Chap. 5. §. 18. p. 272.)

“ The Deputys of *Lower Languedoc* moved this Case, whether Persons having a long time profess'd the true Religion, and coming to understand they were baptiz'd only by a Midwife, ought to be re-baptis'd: This Assembly judgeth, that they ought to be publickly **BAPTIZ'D** in the Church of Christ, according to the Institution of our Lord, by a **LAWFUL MINISTER**; their former Baptism being wholly null and void, because done by one who had no Call unto that Office.”

Having thus given a brief and plain Account of the Reformation of *France* and *Geneva*, I shall endeavour to let before you Mr. *Withers* his Judgment in this Matter, and make a suitable Application.

IF you consult a Pamphlet of his against Mr. *Agate*, you'll find him saying, “ * This Author seems extreamly loath to yield such a Baptism to be valid; any more than that of a *Lay-Man* or *Midwife*: But once, for the sake of the Princess *Sophia*, he confesses such a Baptism sufficient to make a Christian”. 'Tis not material what Mr. *Agate* asserted in this Matter, whether the Charge be false or true: It will be sufficient to our purpose, if I can prove the Invalidity of *Lay-Baptism* from Mr. *Withers*'s Remarks. In the first place he saith, “ † If that Maxim, *Quod fieri non debet, factum valet*, be as universally true as he seems to imply, why will it not hold good in respect of Ordination as well as Baptism? When the former is given by Presbyters, why may not the Action be valid, as to its Substance, tho' uncanonical as to its Performance? Or, why

* Defence of the true and impartial Account, p. 42. printed 1707.
† Ibid. p. 42.

" Should this Rule hold good in one *Case*, and not in the
 " other? I defy him to give one Reason, why *Ordination*
 " by *Presbyters* should not be as effectual as *Baptism* by
 " *Midwives*? ". So far he, and so far I think very just;
 For if the Maxim, *What is once done, tho' unlawfully done, be*
valid, is universally true, then 'tis so in the *Case of Ordina-*
tion, as well as that of *Baptism*: And I add, if it holds good
 in one *Case*, it may in another, and must in that which is
 like it. For, I pray, what is *Ordination*, but giving a Per-
 son Power, or Right to exercise all the Offices that belong
 to a Minister of *that Order* which he is placed in? And
 what is *Baptism*, but putting a Person into the Church of
Christ, and giving him a Right to all the Privileges and
 Benefits of the Christian *Corporation*? Now, if *Baptism*
 given by an unauthoriz'd Hand be *Valid*, that is, *sufficient*
 to the Person so baptiz'd, to all the Purposes for which it
 was Instituted; then, for the same Reason, *Ordination* gi-
 ven by an unauthoriz'd Hand, is sufficient to qualify the
 Person so ordain'd, for the Exercise of the Ministerial
 Office; and he may lawfully Preach, Baptize, &c. upon
 the Strength of that *Commission*; and consequently, 'tis
 needless and absurd to insist upon his *Ordination* again.
 For, as Mr. *Withers* well says, " Why may not the *Action*
 " *be valid, as to its Substance, tho' uncanonical as to its Per-*
 " *formance*? ". That is, Why may not the *Ordination*
 be good and *valid* to the Person ordained, tho' the Ordainer
 acted without a Warrant? Or, in other Words, why
 may not a *Tinker, Cobler, or Midwife*, (who have no Al-
 lowance from Scripture, but are plainly forbid, and sin
 by doing it) confer as good an *Ordination*, as he, who re-
 ceiv'd his Authority from Christ and his Apostles, or their
 Successors? Mr. *Withers* ends the Paragraph very boldly;
 " I defy him to give one Reason why *Ordination* by *Presby-*
 " *ters*, should not be as effectual as *Baptism* by *Midwives* ".
 I will not defy any one to give a Reason against it; and
 shew why an *Irregular Ordination* is not as effectual as an *Ir-*
regular Baptism: But (with all Submission I speak it) if
 I could allow their *Baptisms*, I should hardly dispute their
Ordinations: For if a Person may be admitted into the
 Church, and entitled to all the Privileges of that *Society*,
 by

by the Act of one, who has no *Commission* and *Promise* from Christ; I'm yet to learn, why a Person may not lawfully minister in the Church, tho' put into that Office by one, who has no Authority to do it.

BUT to pass on. I suppose, when Mr. *Withers* says, "I defy him to give one Reason, why *Ordination* by *Presbyters* should not be as effectual, as *Baptism* by *Midwives*," he means, that no Reason can be given, why one should not be as *valid* as the other; or, why one *Irregular* should not be as good as another *Irregular*: But he denies the Effectuality of *Midwives Baptism*, and consequently, if *Presbyters* have no Authority to Ordain, he must deny the Effectuality of their *Ordination* and *Baptism* too. Now, to prove this Charge, I shall take his own Method; for he says (p. 39.) "'Tis a *Maxim* allow'd of by all *Expositors* and *Criticks*, that when a Word or Phrase is of a doubtful Signification, the Sense must be found out by a like Word or Phrase in the same Author." To which Purpose let us consider the third Paragraph of the second Remark, (p. 43.) where he says, "I confess, that by the Church of *Rome*, *Midwives* are not only allow'd but commanded to baptize Infants, in case of great Danger. And then immediately passes his Censure thus, "But I could never yet see one Argument which could tempt me to believe, that they are *MORE Christians AFTER*, than they were *BEFORE*. By which Words he means, that they are no *Christians* after such a *Baptism*; for according to him, every one is a *Pagan* before *Baptism*; and consequently, if the *Midwives Baptism* has made the Person no more than he was *BEFORE*, he is a *Pagan* still. But this is farther evident from the first Paragraph of the second Remark, in which he introduces Mr. *Agate*, saying, "Our Church thinks not fit to reiterate *Baptism* given by a *Midwife*:" And then replies, "The Church of *England* has no where thus declar'd it self; on the contrary its 27th Article runs in these Words, *They that receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church*. A plain Intimation, that where *Baptism* is not rightly receiv'd, 'tis not an Instrument of grafting Persons into the Church of *Christ*. And whatever this Church did formerly, 'tis
very

(4)

" very evident, that for these hundred Years, it has been
 " wiser than to allow of such a Custom." By which Words
 he gives one plainly to understand, that he thinks the
 Church of *England* is against the Validity of *Midwives*
Baptism, and that she is right in that Matter: For his *Con-*
clusion remarkably says, " That for these hundred Years
 " it has been wiser than to allow of such a Custom." Which
 Phrase must mean, that she has for these hundred Years
 understood Scripture and Antiquity better, than to allow,
 what both forbid and condemn. And to confirm this, he
 says in the second Paragraph (p. *ibid.*) " If we consult
 " the *Primitive Church*, we are assur'd by Dr. *Cave* (who
 " understands the Sense of Antiquity better than this Ro-
 " mance Reader) [which Parenthesis proves, that in his
 Judgment Dr. *Cave's* Assertion of the Sense of Antiquity is
 right] " that tho' the Power of *Baptism* was in case of ne-
 " cessity allow'd unto *Lay-Men*, yet it was ever deny'd
 " unto *Women*; whom the Apostle has so expressly forbidden
 " to exercise any *Ministry* in the Church of G O D; and
 " accordingly censur'd in the Apostolical Constitutions,
 " to be not only dangerous, but Unlawful and Impious;
 " and that those *Hereticks* who allow'd of this preposter-
 " ous Course, were universally condemn'd." This I take
 to be good Evidence for the first part of the Charge,
 namely, that *Baptism* by *Midwives* is invalid, or not
 effectual.

I advance therefore, and add, That Mr. *Withers* is per-
 swaded, that whosoever receives an *Ordination* from an
uncanonical Hand, is not validly Ordain'd, and cannot ad-
 minister a *valid Baptism*. That an *Unscriptural Ordination*
 is invalid, we are inform'd in the first Remark before
 quoted and consider'd; wherein he asks many Questions;
 the Sum of which is, That there's as much Reason for
 allowing *Presbyterian Ordinations*, as *Baptism* by *Midwives*.
 Now I have fully shewn from his own Words, that *Baptism*
 by *Midwives* is invalid; and therefore when he says, that
 Mr. *Agate* cannot give one Reason why the *Ordination*
 should not be as effectual as the *Baptism*, he must necessarily
 mean, that if *Presbyterian Ordination* be contrary to *Scripture*,
Antiquity, and the Church of *England*, as he has as-
 serted

rted *Midwives Baptism* to be, then it is also *invalid*. This may be proved from some other Places; but since *Mr. Withers* has declar'd himself, in his last *Pamphlet* against *Mr. Agate*, (p. 125.) to be one of the Number of those *Protestant Dissenters*, who go under the Denomination of *Presbyterians*, I need say no more to it; for all, or most of them do maintain, that no *Ordinations* conferr'd by a less Person than a *Presbyter* are *valid*; and, without doubt, so *Chief Leader*, tho' he will not fight, arm'd with the *Scripture* and the *Fathers*, for the *Divine Institution*, and *Unalterableness* of the *Scotish*, or *Genevan Platform* in all its Branches, yet will even dare to do it in this Case, against the *Champion*, and *Patron* of the *Christian Rights*, for the *Security* and *Honour* of his own *Order*.

BUT further; If *Ordination* by a *Lay-hand* be *invalid*, then *Baptism* too by a *Lay-hand* is *invalid*. Now, that *Lay-Men* are not only excluded from *Preaching*, and *Ordaining* others to the *Ministry*, but from *baptizing* too, we have a clear Proof in the following Words. Remark the 4th (*Defence*, &c. p. 44.) "The Church of *England* (in the Article just now mention'd) asserts, that *Baptism* seals both Pardon of Sin, and Adoption. Now, if these Glorious Privileges are, in this Ordinance, convey'd to us, this must be done by Virtue of, and in Compliance with, some Promise, which CHRIST hath made us in his Gospel. But those whom CHRIST hath promised to be with, in the Administration of *Baptism*, are such, as are Commission'd by him to Preach the Gospel and teach all Nations, as well as to baptize. This evidently appears, to him that consults *Matth.* 28. 19. If therefore, CHRIST hath no where commanded *Lay-Men*, or *Women* to baptize, nor promis'd to concur with them in such an Act, what reason have we to expect those blessed Advantages, which a due Performance of it will convey unto us? Should I steal the *QUEEN's Great-Seal* from the Lord-Keeper, and affix it to any Grant or Patent; this would not give me a lawful Title to any Privilege, or Honour so surreptitiously procur'd". And in the Remark before this, he says, "I would ask this Gentleman (p. 44. *Ibid.*) whether (by advancing this Notion) he has not

done

“ done *Disservice* to his own *Character* and *Function*? For
 “ if a *Tinker*, *Cobler*, or old *Woman*, may administer a va-
 “ lid *Baptism*, and the *Church of England* determining,
 “ that in every true *Baptism*, the *Promises of Forgiveness of Sin*
 “ and of *Adoption*, are visibly sign’d and seal’d; will not a
 “ covetous Mind be tempted to infer, that if all these glo-
 “ rious *Advantages* may be so easily obtain’d, the Mini-
 “ sterial Office must be less necessary and useful? Mr. *Agate*
 “ seems by this, to put an *Argument* into a prophane
 “ Mouth, against his own *Order*”. From all which I may
 fairly conclude, that Mr. *Withers* thinks a *Commission* ne-
 cessary, and that *Lay-Men* cannot do any ministerial Acts
 effectually and validly, as having no *Commission* nor *Pro-*
mise from *CHRIST*. I could produce several things, to
 prove that this *Opinion* was maintain’d by the *Old Presby-*
terians in *England*; and that it is not departed from by the
Moderns: But it being so well known, I shall not say any
 thing concerning it. Now, this I remark upon the whole,
 that Mr. *Withers* and the *Calvinistical Churches* ought to be
 well assur’d of a *real*, and therefore *valid Mission*; since,
 by their own *Confession*, they have no *Christian Baptism*,
 if their *Baptizers* are not in *Holy Orders*.

HERE it may be expected that I should say a few
 things against the *Validity of Presbyterian Ordination*; but
 since Mr. *Withers* has not thought it his *Province*, in the
CAVEAT, to contend for it, I shall appeal to what has
 been already writ on that Head. It will be sufficient now,
 if I shew, that the *Church of England* asserts *Bishops* to be
 an *Order* above *Presbyters*; and that none are *Ministers*
 without *Episcopal Ordination*; and that none but *Ministers*
 can administer a *valid Baptism*. But before I do this,
 I must not conceal, that the *Lutherans* and *Zuinglians* allow
Baptism by any *Man* or *Woman*. Now, Mr. *Withers* (as
 well as the *Churches* just mention’d) condemns their *Prac-*
tice, and unchurches many of them into the Bargain: And
 if he be of Mr. *Bingham’s* *Opinion*, that the *Greek*, *Russian*,
 and *Muscovite Churches*, allow *Lay Baptism*; then they,
 besides all those who have been baptiz’d by a *Lay-Man* or
Midwife, before and since the *REFORMATION*, fall
 under an heavy *Censure*: So that if *Consequences* must
 be

be regarded (which do not affect the Merits of a Cause, TRUTH being TRUTH let what will follow) Mr. *Withers* and his *Friends* are not a little guilty of *Uncharitableness*. Our Principle is the same, namely, that *Lay-Baptism* is *invalid*; and if more Churches were condemn'd by us than by them, this would be only accidental, and would not any way alter the Case. But on the contrary, since we are assur'd, that the *Greek, Russian, and Muscovite* Churches have *Bishops*, and for the most part do not allow Baptism, but by Persons Episcopally Ordain'd; how can Mr. *Withers* say, That we *contradict the whole World*, and that *all the Churches upon Earth are against us*, when the *Greek, &c.* are greater than all the *Foreign Reform'd*, if not greater than the *Roman Catholick Churches* join'd to them? Before Mr. *Withers* his Charge holds good, he must prove, that there are no *Bishops* in these Churches; or that they are look'd upon no more than those, which, he says, are among the *Lutherans*. Mr. *Withers* remarkably says, I am the *second Instance of this Kind, for more than a thousand Years*: He might have said as well, *more than fifteen hundred Years*; for we cannot find in all Antiquity, any Footsteps of *Presbyters* in opposition to *Bishops*; and therefore we ought not to look into Antiquity for Instances of renouncing *Presbyterian* Baptism, when there was no *Presbyter* (at most but one of Note) who pretended to any Power without the *Bishop*; and even he condemn'd for *Heresy*. And if he baptiz'd after his *Censure*, the Act was still *valid*, because he was ordain'd by a *Bishop*; and consequently there could not be a renouncing of *Presbyterian* Baptism in a *modern* Sense, *i. e.* Baptism administer'd by a *Presbyter* made so by another of the same Order. If the Person by the *Censure* was reduc'd to a *Lay-Man*, then Baptism administer'd by him, would only be *Lay-Baptism*: And if Mr. *Withers*, with the Assembly, should *vacate* the Orders of any *unruly Presbyter*, I suppose he would not be angry at any one's renouncing such a Person's Baptism. If *Bishops* in the *Primitive Church*, were only *Pastors of single Congregations*, and not distinct from, but another Name for *Presbyters* (as Mr. *Withers* has pretended to prove in his last Pamphlet against Mr. *Agate*) 'tis true there could

not be a *renouncing* of *Presbyterian* Baptism, when there was no higher *Order* than *that* of *Presbyters* to receive it from. But this is saying nothing. However, still we are *modester* than *Mr. Withers*, in that, if we do contradict the *Primitive Church*, and the *World*, 'tis not wittingly, whilst he, who acknowledges that *both* have allow'd *Lay* Baptism, plainly does contradict 'em, when he pronounces it *invalid*. But I affirm, I am not the *second* nor the *third Instance*, within these *Hundred Years* and *less*; but that many have been (as he expresses it) *rebaptiz'd*, upon their coming over to the *Church of England*; of which, if he be clamorous, I shall produce several *Instances*: And this I take to be a sufficient *Reply* to the first *Section*.

WE come now to the 2d *Section*, wherein he says, That *this Practice of Rebaptizing is most directly contrary to the Sense of the Church of England, and to those Measures which she has constantly pursu'd ever since the Reformation*. Now I shall first give a plain and brief *Account* of the *Sense* of the *Church of England*; and then particularly reply to what he offers for the *Proof* of his *Assertion*.

AND first of all, let us hear the 23d *Article*, "It is
 " not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of
 " publick Preaching, or Ministring the Sacraments in the
 " Congregation, before he be lawfully call'd and sent to
 " execute the same: And those we ought to judge law-
 " fully call'd and sent, which be chosen and called to this
 " Work by Men who have publick Authority given unto
 " them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers
 " into the Lord's Vineyard". Now when 'tis said, *It is*
not lawful; &c. it must mean, it is not lawful according to
 the *Word* of *God*, for any to Preach or Minister the Sacra-
 ments, without a Call and Mission by an Authority ap-
 pointed by the *Word* or *Law* of *GOD*: For these *Articles*
 are call'd *Articles of Religion*; which Title plainly inti-
 mates, that they were in the Opinion of the Church, to
 be believ'd, as taken from the *Scriptures*, in which our
 Religion is to be found in its pure and lovely Form. And
 to put this out of all Doubt, 'tis said in so many Words
 in his Majesty's Declaration (which is prefix'd to the *Ar-*
ticles)

articles) that the *Articles of the Church of England* do contain
 the true Doctrine of the Church of England, agreeable to God's
 Word. But farther, when 'tis said, " We ought to
 judge those lawfully call'd and sent, which be chosen
 and call'd to this Work by Men who have publick Au-
 thority given unto them in the Congregation, to call
 and send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard ". It must
 mean for the same Reason that *those* are only lawfully called
 and sent, who be chosen and called by Men who have Authority
 given them from the Scriptures, to ordain Ministers in the
 Church: And who, according to the Church of England,
 have this Authority to ordain Ministers in the Church of
 CHRIST, will appear from the first Paragraph of the
 Preface to the Book of Consecration and Ordering of Bi-
 shops, Priests and Deacons. The Words run thus, " It is
 evident unto all Men, diligently reading Holy Scrip-
 ture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles time,
 there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's
 Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; which Offices
 were evermore had in such reverend Estimation, that
 no Man might presume to execute any of them, except
 he were first call'd, try'd, examin'd, and known to
 have such Qualities as are requisite for the same; and
 also by publick Prayer, with Imposition of Hands, were
 approved and admitted thereunto by lawful Authority:
 And therefore, to the Intent that these Orders may be
 continued, and reverently used and esteemed in the
 Church of England, no Man shall be accounted or taken
 to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon, in the Church
 of England, or suffered to execute any of the said Fun-
 ctions, except he be call'd, try'd, examin'd and ad-
 mitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter fol-
 lowing; or hath had formerly Episcopal Consecration
 or Ordination ". This is so exprefs for three Orders,
 and that none are lawful Ministers without Episcopal Or-
 dination, that it would be trifling to comment upon it.
 And I appeal to the impartial part of Mankind, whether
 the Church of England does not set those who have only
 Presbyterian Ordination, upon the same Bottom with Lay-
 men? The Question therefore to be answer'd, is, Whe-

ther the Church allows Baptism by a *Lay-Hand*? And if it appears she does not, then the Charge of *Disobedience*, and *spitting in our Mother's Face*, falls to the Ground.

AND to prove this, I shall consider the Article before-mention'd again; namely, the 23d, where we are told, "That it is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of Minist'ring the Sacraments, before he be lawfully call'd and sent to execute the same". Now, the *Law* relating to the Minist'ring of Sacraments, is in our Saviour's *Institution* of them; therefore 'tis, by this Article, *contrary* to the very *Institution* of the Christian Sacraments, for any Man not lawfully call'd and sent, to Minister them: And of course, the *Dissenters*, who are reckon'd *Lay-men* by our Church, act contrary to the *Institution* of the Sacraments, when they administer them. And what will make Ministrations invalid, if their being contrary to the *Institution*, will not? And I would ask, if the Church had said, *It is not lawful for any other Form to be us'd in Baptism, than that in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; whether you would not think the Church excluded all other Forms, and adjudg'd Baptism null without *that Form*, as being perform'd contrary to the *Institution* in which *that Form* was requir'd? I don't doubt you would; and why not in the Case of the *Administrator*, as well as the *Form*, when she declares, that 'tis not lawful for any Man to administer it, before he be lawfully call'd and sent: For the *Administrator* is as essential and durable a part of the *Institution* of Baptism, as the *Form* it self; and therefore there is as much Reason for nulling a Baptism perform'd by an *unlawful Hand*, as *that* without the *Form*. And that the *Administrator* is an essential part, Mr. *Wither's* confesses himself, as is evident from these Words; "Those whom CHRIST hath promised to be with, in the Administration of Baptism, are such as are commission'd by him to preach the Gospel, and teach all Nations, as well as to Baptize. This evidently appears to him that consults *Matth. 28. 19*. If therefore CHRIST hath no where commanded *Lay-men*, or *Women*, to Baptize, nor promis'd to concur with them in such an Act, what Reason have we to expect those blessed Advantages, which

a due Performance of it will convey unto us? Should I steal the *QUEEN's Great Seal* from the *Lord-Keeper*, and affix it to any *Grant* or *Patent*; this would not give me a lawful Title to any Privilege or Honour so surreptitiously procur'd".

BUT to pass on: The Church in her 26th Article, affirms, concerning the Minister of Baptism (which is one of the Sacraments she is there speaking of) that he does not Minister the same in his own Name, but in Christ's, and by his Commission and Authority— That the Sacraments be effectual, because of Christ's Institution and Promise". She asserts this, to remove the Scruples of some People, who might fancy, that the *Word* and *Sacraments* were useless and unprofitable, when a wicked Minister did officiate. And to give a true Notion of the Matter, she plainly declares, that the *Commission* of the Person is the chief thing we should regard; and that if the Minister acts in *Christ's Name*, and by his *Authority*, whatever be the Qualities of the Man, the People well disposed, shall not suffer upon that Account: For, as she says, *The Sacraments are effectual, because of Christ's Institution and Promise*. If so, then take away the *Cause*, and the *Effect* must cease: The *Cause* of their being effectual, is *Christ's Institution and Promise*; but his Institution of *Go ye* is wanting, when an unauthoriz'd Person attempts to Baptize (*St. Matth. 28. 19.* and Article 23 of the Church of England). His *Promise* is also here no ways concern'd, for that [*lo I am with you always, &c.*] was made only to authoriz'd Persons, (*St. Matth. 28. 19.*) consequently the uncommission'd Baptizer hath neither Christ's Institution nor his Promise; and therefore his Ministration being destitute of these, has not the *Cause* sufficient to make it effectual by this 26th Article of our Church; and the unavoidable Consequence of this is, that such his Ministration is in its own Nature ineffectual, and therefore null and void, because destitute of the *Cause* which makes good and valid: And all this is no more than Mr. *Withers* says in other Words, which at the end of the 23d Article I quoted.

THE 27th Article defines Baptism to be, " Not only
 " a Sign of Profession, and Mark of Difference, &c. but
 " also a Sign of Regeneration, or New Birth, whereby,
 " as by an Instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly,
 " are grafted into the Church; the Promises of the For-
 " giveness of Sin, and of our Adoption to be Sons of
 " God, &c. are visibly sign'd and seal'd ". And in her Catechism, she teaches, that a Sacrament is a *Pledge to assure* us of inward Spiritual *Grace*; consequently, that Baptism (which is a Sacrament) is a *Pledge or Earnest* given us, to assure us of those Infinite Blessings before spoken of, in the 27th Article. You see, Baptism is said to be a *Sign, whereby, as by an Instrument, they who receive it rightly, are grafted into the Church*: And that *Pardon and Adoption are visibly sign'd and seal'd* to them. Now, if she has declar'd in the 23d Article, that none can lawfully minister the Sacraments without a lawful Mission; and in the 26th Article, that the Sacraments are effectual, because of Christ's Institution and Promise; How can Baptism be rightly received, without a lawful instituted Hand? And consequently, if not rightly received, 'tis not an Instrument to *graft* such into the Church, and to *sign and seal* to them Pardon and Adoption: For *signing, and sealing, and giving of Pledges*, can never be validly done by any, but the Principal, or his appointed Agent: And there is no other reveal'd way, under the present Christian Dispensation, for God *visibly to sign and seal* to us, and *give* us an outward visible Pledge to assure us of his Favour, but by means of his commission'd Substitutes: Therefore I conclude, 'tis the Church's Doctrin in this 27th Article, and in her Catechism, that Men must be vested with the Divine Commission to Baptize; because without such a Commission, Baptism is not a *Sign, Seal, and Pledge*, on God's Part, and therefore not the Baptism which he instituted; consequently no Christian Baptism; and if so, then utterly invalid. Mr. Withers his Words prove the very same thing, to which I refer you.

THE 37th Article says, " We give not to our Princes
 " the Minist'ring either of God's Word, or of the Sacra-
 " ments— but that only Prerogative, &c. — that they
 " should

should rule all Estates and Degrees committed to their Charge by God, &c. The Church, by this Expression, *We give not, &c.* can only mean, *We attribute not to our Princes, or, We believe not that our Princes have the Power or Authority of Ministering God's Word, or the Sacraments*. For 'tis not to be suppos'd that she gives Princes the Prerogative of Ruling, &c. That Prerogative they have, without any Gift from her; and that is express'd in those Words, *Committed to their Charge by God*. So that she only designs to teach us, that she believes Princes have such a Prerogative. Now, if a Prince has no Power or Right to minister the Sacraments; then, no other Lay-Man: For a Man's being a Prince, or promoted to a Throne, does by no means deprive him of any Power he had as a Lay-Christian. And therefore, since our Church does believe that Princes have not the Power of ministering the Sacraments; she necessarily includes all other Lay-men to be destitute of this Power; otherwise, inferior Lay-Christians are, as such, superior in Spiritual Power, to their Lay-Christian Sovereigns; which is absurd. From all which, 'tis evident, that all unauthoriz'd, or Lay-Ministrations of the Sacraments, in the Sense of the Church of England, are null and void. I could produce some Canons and Rubricks, if this Matter wanted more Confirmation: But seeing what I have said, is plain, and full to the Purpose, I shall immediately examine those Considerations by which he endeavours to maintain the contrary Assertion; and refer those who have a mind to read, a full and rational Account of the Church's Doctrine, in this Point, to the Book entitled, *Dissenters Baptism null and void*.

HE says, That the 55th Canon enjoyns all Preachers to pray before their Sermons, in so many Words, for the Catholick Church; and especially for the Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland: And that in her publick Offices and Forms of Devotion, two Collects we have constantly had for the Reform'd Churches Abroad, or beyond the Seas. 'Tis very true; but if (as I have proved from the Articles, and could also from the Canons and Rubricks, or Rules) the Church of England did at that very time declare, that none were lawful Ministers,

nisters, without Episcopal Ordination ; and that no Lay-Hand could validly Minister the Word and Sacraments : Then, when in *so many Words*, the Ministers are enjoyn'd to pray for the Church of Scotland, and the *Reformed Churches abroad*, the Church could not mean, that they were proper and compleat Churches, or Christians, in the *Sense* of being validly Baptized : But as they were not a *Rout*, or *confus'd Multitude*, but had a Government which themselves thought of Divine Institution ; or which else they retain'd, because they could not introduce another ; and were *Reform'd* from most of the Corruptions of the *Romish* (if I may speak it) Church ; upon that account they were enjoyn'd to be pray'd for as *Reformed Churches*. And if they mean no more, as I have prov'd they cannot, one may well use them in that Sense, without Perjury, as Mr. *Withers*, out of the abundance of his Charity, charges upon those who have been concern'd in my Baptism. I shall take this Occasion to say, that no Clergyman, when he declares his *Assent* and *Consent*, does, or is oblig'd, to mean, that there is no Improper Phrase or Word in the Book of *Common-Prayer*, but only this, that with a candid, and yet honest Interpretation, it may Lawfully be used. And now this Question may not be Unreasonable ; whether when Mr. *Withers* prays for the *Reformed Churches abroad*, he does not include the *Lutherans* and *Zuinglians*, and others of the same Opinion in point of Baptism ? And if he does (as he will not I presume deny) how can he do it strictly and properly, since by allowing *Lay-mens* and *Womens* Baptism, they not only contradict the express Words of Scripture, but the Sense and Practice of the Primitive Church, and his own Judgment enlighten'd and confirm'd by both. But to say all at once ; if the Church of *England* has used the Word *Church* where 'tis plain she could not, and did not mean a *True Church*, I hope the Dispute will drop. Well then, in the 19th Article, we have this Definition of a true and perfect Church ; “ The visible Church of
“ Christ is a Congregation of faithful Men, in the which,
“ the pure Word of God is preach'd, and the Sacraments
“ be duly ministred, according to Christ's Ordinance, in
“ all those things that of necessity are requisite to the
“ same ”.

" same ". To which is subjoin'd a Remark, viz. as *such Churches (naming them) have erred, so also hath the Church of Rome erred, &c.* Now every one knows, that the Church of Rome has not the *pure Word of God preached, nor the Sacraments duly administer'd according to Christ's Ordinance, nor all things requisite and necessary to the Constitution of a true Church*: Therefore, when 'tis said the Church of Rome, 'tis said according to the common way of Speaking. The Title of *Church*, is, what Rome and every other place that professes Christianity, claims; and what every one gives, without meaning that they deserve that honourable Title in all Respects. Mr. *Withers* understood this well enough (for he once subscribed this Article) but I believe he was a little overgone with Heat, when he vented such Trifles, to make out his Charge of Perjury.

MR. *Withers* says farther, *We may judge of the Church of England's Sense, by her Conduct, or the Practice of the Generality of the Clergy and Bishops, from the Reformation to this Moment.*

First of all, HE brings an Instance of one that was allow'd to preach, &c. when he was only ordain'd by a *Presbytery* in Scotland.

Secondly; THAT such as have had a Presbyterian Baptism in their Infancy, have been allow'd Episcopal Confirmation when they came to riper Years, as often as they have desired it.

Thirdly; THAT such have been admitted to the Communion almost in all the Parish Churches.

Fourthly; THAT Persons who have only had a Presbyterian Baptism, have been admitted to *Holy Orders*.

Fifthly; THAT the Lords the Bishops, (several of them) sent a Declaration down to the Lower-House, determining, that according to the Judgment and Practice of the Catholick Church of Christ, and of the Church of *England* in particular, if there be but Water, and the Form us'd in Baptism, an irregular Administrator does not invalidate and null it. This is the Sum and Substance of what he says; and I think I cannot better answer it, than in the Words of a late Author, who had near the same Objections thrown against him.

“ I have * already endeavour’d to prove, That the
 “ Church in Convocation, whose Voice we may still hear if
 “ we please, in her Articles, Canons, and Rubricks; is
 “ not silent, but speaks loudly enough to us concerning this
 “ Matter; and I know of *no other Voice* of the Church of
 “ England, but that. If any would obtrude upon us the
 “ Practice of *Particular Members*, how great and numerous
 “ soever, and call that the Principle and Doctrine of our
 “ Church; before we give him Credit, he must allow us
 “ to compare their Practice with the Church’s written
 “ and publish’d Articles and Laws: And if we find Pra-
 “ ctices inconsistent with these, we must prefer the latter,
 “ and *reject* and *bemoil* the former. Who tells this Au-
 “ thor, that the Bishops confirm’d Lay-baptiz’d Persons
 “ *as rightly Baptiz’d*? That their Lordships did it with a
 “ particular Regard to the *Validity* of such Baptism? I can
 “ tell him of Confirmations in our Days, perform’d upon
 “ this Principle, that the Baptism receiv’d by the Con-
 “ firm’d Persons, from the Hands of *Dissenting Teachers*
 “ [who are Laicks] was not *good* and *valid* before Confir-
 “ mation, but made *valid* by Confirmation. This (tho’
 “ I absolutely deny the Principle) I can prove by Living
 “ Witnesses, to be the Foundation upon which Confirma-
 “ tion has been lately given to Persons so *pretendedly Bap-*
 “ *tiz’d*: And how can our Author prove, that the Bi-
 “ shops, since the Restoration, went upon any other Prin-
 “ ciple than this, in their Confirmation of Dissenters
 “ Children, who were only baptiz’d by Lay-Hands? But
 “ further”:

“ WHAT if I should affirm, that, tho’ during the time
 “ of the long unnatural Rebellion, when the Episcopal Mi-
 “ nisters were thrown and kept out of their Livings; yet
 “ they perform’d their spiritual Functions, and baptiz’d
 “ the Children of the Members of the Church of *England*:
 “ And that almost all the Teachers, who got into their
 “ Benefices by complying with the Wickedness of the
 “ Times, had before been Episcopally Ordain’d, and so
 “ were empower’d to Baptize: And that upon these Ac-
 “ counts

* Dissenters Baptism null and void, p. 48 to 53.

counts, the Bishops, when they Confirm'd after the Restoration, might not suppose that any were brought to be confirm'd by them, but such as had been Episcopally Baptiz'd? And that they did not expect any of our Anti-Episcopal Dissenters Children who were otherwise Baptiz'd, should be brought to them for Confirmation? What if I should insist upon these things? Can our Author prove to the contrary? If he can, then,"

HOW does he know, but the Bishops of that time, subject to like Failings and Passions with other Men, were loath, by such *discriminating* Acts, to rouse the *turbulent* Spirit of Rebellion, then but hardly laid asleep by the Restoration? What if the Experience they had had of Arch-Bishop *Laud's* Fate, who was brought to the Block by Fanatick Fury, only for endeavouring to restore and establish much smaller Matters in the Church, might make them not willing to expose themselves and the Church, to the insatiable Rage of such merciless Persecutors; by their *openly* and *in direct* Terms proclaiming Anti-Episcopal Dissenters to be not incorporated Members of Christ's Church? Is it any new thing for good Men to be thus intimidated? Is not the great Apostle *St. Peter*, an Instance of this Frailty of Human Nature? See his Behaviour with respect to the *Jews and Gentiles*, for which *St. Paul* withstood him to the Face, *Gal. 2. 11, 12.*—*St. Barnabas* also was carried away with the same Fault, to temporize with the *Jewish Christians*; for which, *St. Paul* loudly proclaims, that *they walked not uprightly, according to the Truth of the Gospel.* Indeed, the very best of Men, without any Affront to their Character, yea, and very great Bodies of Men too, have been, still are, and always will be, in this World, liable to Infirmities: And must Practices consequent thereupon, be used as Arguments against the known Laws of that Church whereof they are Members, and even Governors? Must these be called such Proofs! so clear and so evident! that we must despair of Proofs if these are not so? This is amazing! But what is not a Proof to those who will have it one? However, to

“ bring this Matter to a short Issue. *From particular*
 “ *Practices to publick Principles, there is no Argument.* Let
 “ our Author prove, that the Confirmation of Persons
 “ Baptiz’d by *unauthoriz’d* Baptizers, is a *necessary Con-*
 “ *sequence* of our Church’s Articles and Laws concerning
 “ Baptism and Confirmation: And when he has done this,
 “ then I fairly promise him publickly to acknowledge, that
 “ it is the Judgment of the Church of *England*, that un-
 “ authoriz’d Baptisms, and consequently our Dissenters
 “ Baptisms, are good and valid— But this he has not yet
 “ done; and I dare further add, that he never will:
 “ Therefore, the Church’s Laws stand against him, and
 “ his Instances of *promiscuous* Confirmations (among which,
 “ some who never were baptiz’d, either in Reality, or
 “ in Pretence, *have been admitted* for want of due Enquiry)
 “ are no more Arguments of the Church’s Judgment that
 “ unauthoriz’d Baptisms are good and valid, than the
 “ Confirmation of unbaptiz’d Persons, is an Argument,
 “ that our Church esteems Baptism not necessary, as a
 “ previous Qualification to be Confirm’d by the Bishop”.

TO this I shall add, that the Bishops who sent the De-
 claration quoted by Mr. *Withers*, are for reordaining all
those Dissenting Ministers who come over to the Church;
 and have done it; and consequently they look upon the
Presbyterians as *Lay-men*, whose Baptism he has taught me
 not to think *valid*. But to conclude this Head, I shall quote
 Canon the 139th, which runs thus: “ Whosoever shall
 “ hereafter affirm, that the sacred Synod of this Nation,
 “ in the Name of Christ, and by the King’s Authority
 “ assembled, is not the true Church of *England*, by Repre-
 “ sentation, let him be excommunicated, and not restor’d
 “ until he repent and publickly revoke that his wicked
 “ Error”. See also Canons 140, 141. by which it ap-
 pears, that the Sense of the Church of *England* is to be
 judged by those Acts which are made in *Convocation*, and
 not from the Practices of any Members or Governours of
 it. Now, for Mr. *Withers* to say, we must judge of the
Sense of the Church of *England*, by the Practices of the
 Many,

Many, or Great; when the *Canons* say quite contrary, is a shrewd Indication, that he never look'd upon *these* last *Canons*, or that he had a mind to impose upon the numberless *Vulgar*. And this especially confirms me in the last Opinion, that when Mr. *Agate* is introduc'd, saying, *Our Church thinks not fit to reiterate Baptism given by a Midwife*; he smartly replies, *What Church?* "The Church of *England* has no where thus declar'd its self: On the contrary, its 27th Article runs in these Words, *they that receive Baptism rightly, are grafted into the Church*. A plain Intimation, that where Baptism is not rightly receiv'd, 'tis not an Instrument of *grafting* Persons into the *Church of Christ*: And whatever this Church did formerly, 'tis very evident, that for these Hundred Years, it has been wiser than to allow of such a Custom". From which you see, that he then thought the Church of *England* spoke by her Articles, and not by the Practices of any Members or Governours. And if he did not think so, why had he not said thus? *The Church of England has no where thus declar'd it self; but on the contrary, the Practice and Opinion of most of the Clergy run counter to your Assertion*. And pray observe his Conclusion, *Whatever this Church did formerly, &c.* Which Words must necessarily have respect to the Alteration of the *Rubrick* made by King *JAMES* the First, and confirm'd afterwards in *CONVOCAATION*: For we know, that some of the greatest Men in the Church did then, and have since, plainly declar'd the Validity of Women's Baptism; and the Declaration before consider'd, makes the Administrator of Baptism *not essential*: So that many of her chief Members and Governours have not been *wiser than to allow of such a Custom*: And therefore he means the Church of *England* in a proper Sense, as she speaks in her *Articles* and *Rubricks*. Now, when he had so retorted upon Mr. *Agate*, how could he, with any Colour of Honesty, play upon us the *Opinion* and *Practice* of the *Clergy*, as the Sense of the Church of *England*? But different Times and Occasions must be nicely regarded; and a Man that cannot look and talk two different Ways with an Air, is now-a-days hiss'd for a Fool.

BUT

BUT to go on. In the 3d Section he says, That it is an Affront to the State, as well as to the Church. And is not the Dissenters keeping off the Church, an Affront too? For are not all lately excluded from Offices, but those who join in Communion with the Church of England? And does not that Act shew, that the Queen, Lords and Commons insist upon their being no longer Dissenters from the Establish'd Church? But do the Dissenters think themselves oblig'd to alter their Principles upon that Account? Nay, but all Persons in Places of Trust, are oblig'd to take the Sacramental Test; and some have been advanc'd to the highest Stations, and have had the good Fortune to be esteem'd the best Supporters of Monarchy and Episcopacy, who have had their Birth and Education in Dissenting Families. But if this Doctrine gets Ground, the Queen must first ask leave of the Parson of the Parish; and 'twill be in the Power of a few peevish Clergymen, to lay an Embargo on the Prerogative, &c. 'Tis strange that one, who has recommended Resistance in an Historical Narrative, should talk of cramping the Queen, and infringing the Prerogative. Must a Man shipwreck his Conscience, and betray the Church, to please the State? Would Mr. Withers receive one known to be baptiz'd by a Layman, or Woman, to the Sacrament, because he was requir'd by the State? However, in short, I would be obedient to all things lawful; and when I could not honestly obey, I would endeavour quietly to submit: For I had rather lose a Place, than give up any thing that Christ has expressly, or by necessary Consequence, commanded. But I believe no one need fear, under this, or any pious Government, to discharge his Duty. If any Man, or Men, make an humble Remonstrance, why they cannot receive such to the Communion, without doubt there would be a Dispensation; especially, since so many other Clergy-men who are of a different Judgment, could perform the Command as well. And farther, if all the Clergy, or the Majority of them, were dissatisfy'd in it, I don't doubt, but as the Government can take Men into Offices without such a Qualification, so it would. And this is plain from the Design of such an Injunction, which was to engage Men to have

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have a peculiar Regard to that Church, thro' which they
pass'd to their several Posts of Honour and Service.

IN the 4th Section, 'tis roundly asserted, That our
Practice makes very much against King *Charles* the first.
To which I answer, That supposing he was Baptiz'd by a
Presbyterian Minister, yet, if you consider what I said in
the Beginning, we need not *take off his Crown of Martyrdom,*
or *blot his Name out of the English Calendar.* I find, that
what he has said here, is in a manner the same that he said
in his *Defence of the True and Impartial Account*; and
therefore I refer you to Mr. *Agate's* Reply to it, in his *Plain*
Truth, or an *Answer to the Defence*, (Part I. p. 57.) I shall
only say this, that King *JAMES*, as is well known, was
so great a Friend to Episcopal Ministers, that if there
were any at that time (the contrary of which is not yet
prov'd) they would not have been over-look'd by him.
King *CHARLES* himself was well perswaded of the *Di-*
vine Institution of Episcopacy; and if he had been also as
well perswaded of the Invalidity of a Baptism administer'd
by an *unlawful* Hand, I should, I doubt not, have had him
for my Example. But he seems to have been of Opinion, that
Baptism when given by a *Woman*, is *valid*; tho' at the
same time affirming, that * none ought to do it but lawful
Ministers, and that a *lawful* Minister was absolutely neces-
sary to the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*. Mr. *Withers*, I
presume, will not insult here, since he condemns that Opi-
nion as much as we. But 'tis an Affront to differ from
any great Man, when that different Judgment falls hard
upon him and his Friends. In short, however the Case
stands as to King *Charles*, I see no Reason to alter my Prin-
ciple. I shall ever remember him with all the Veneration
that is due to so great and good a Prince, notwithstanding
the Supposition of his want of a *valid* Baptism. In fine, every
honest Church-man will commemorate him as a Martyr,
for the purest Faith, and the best Church in the World;
and learn to imitate his most Christian Courage and Pa-
tience, in suffering all Barbarities, even to Death, ra-
ther than sacrifice a Cause which deriv'd it self from
Heaven.

* See the King's 2d Paper to Mr. *Henderjon*.

IN the 5th Section, he says, *That it is an Affront to her present Majesty, and arraigns her Conduct.* Mr. Withers is very complaisant and sweet upon the Queen and the late Prince. *The Queen was pleas'd to accept him for her Royal Consort: Nor did she ever repent her Choice; and we all look'd upon his Highness as a virtuous, religious Prince.* We know the Matter of Fact, and dispute not his Virtue and Piety: But what then? Because the Queen accepted him for her Consort, and he behav'd himself exemplarily in that, and all other Relations; must we attribute to the Prince, what he never had? Besides, is he sure, that the Prince did not receive his Baptism from a Lay-man's, or Woman's Hand, both which are allow'd in that Church? If he did, he is no Christian in Mr. Withers's reckoning: So that upon his own Scheme, the Prince's Christianity is precarious and uncertain: And will he dare to arraign the Queen's Conduct?

IN the 6th Section we are told, that *this new Scheme is schismatical.* To this Purpose he quotes Dr. Stillingfleet, who says, "That whatever confines, must also divide the Church; for by that Confinement, a Separation is made between the Party confin'd, and the other; which Separation must be made by the Party so limiting Christian Communion". Taking it as quoted, I own, that whoever confines, or denies, any Body of Men to be a True Church, must also divide the Church; because the Party so confining, must necessarily separate from the Party confin'd or limited. What follows? Did not the *Presbyterians* do so at the Reformation? And don't they think they did well in it? And must we be condemn'd, because we carry the Matter a little farther, and not only think the Church of *Rome* very bad, but *them* not so good as they should be? Separating and Limiting is a Duty sometimes; and whoever does separate, or confine, when it is a Duty, deserves not a Censure, but the highest Encomiums. But before Persons separate, or confine, they should well consider, and debate with themselves; for to separate from a true Apostolical Church, tho' the State should not require,

but

but forbid Communion with it, is a Crime not so little, as is commonly imagin'd. But he says, *We not only by this Scheme separate from the Reform'd Churches, but from our own Church also, to which we pretend to be united. How so? We Act without the Consent, and contrary to the Practice and Declaration of the Bishops and Governours; and we reject many of the Clergy and Laity, and those whom the Spiritual Fathers are ready to receive.* What then? Because some act upon mistaken Principles, must we, contrary to the greatest Evidences, follow them? Or, because some act ill, must we not dare to overlook their Example, and do well? This is pretty Doctrine indeed. But the Sense of the Church of England, you ought not to contradict, and profess your self a Member at the same time. Very true: But the Practice of the greater Number, and the Declaration of the Lords, is not the Sense of the Church of England; and therefore every Man that is honest, will look to the Book of Common-Prayer, the Articles, and Canons, and not matter what others say or do, in contradiction to them. But he says farther, *That we have receiv'd the very Schism of the Donatists, who insisted on the Rebaptization of all that came over to them.* Now, that I may deal fairly in this Matter, I shall quote his own Narrative of the Schism of the Donatists, and make a brief Animadversion upon it.

“ THE * Schism of the Donatists consisted in their
 “ confining the Catholick Church to a small part of it;
 “ the Original of which, was a Squabble about a *fat Bi-*
 “ *shoprick*: There being a Vacancy in the See of Carthage,
 “ *Cecilian* was, by the Suffrages of the People, chosen,
 “ and consecrated by *Felix* of Aptungis, a neighbouring
 “ Bishop. This is what some few Persons were disgusted
 “ at; and amongst others, one *Lucilla*, an intriguing cun-
 “ ning Woman, and very rich, who had been reprov'd
 “ by this good Man for some ill things she had been guilty
 “ of. They affirm'd *Cecilian* to be unfit for such a Digni-
 “ ty; pretending, that he and his Ordainer were both
 “ *Traditors* (i. e. such as in Times of Persecution, secured
 “ their own Lives and Liberties, by delivering the Sacred

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“ Vo-

“ Volumes to be burnt). These *Malecontents* moreover
 “ solicited and brib’d the Bishops of *Numidia*, a Neigh-
 “ bouring Province; who, to the Number of Seventy,
 “ with their *Primate* or *Metropolitan*, came to *Carthage*,
 “ and summon’d *Cacilian* to answer what should be objected
 “ to him. But he, disowning their Authority, and dis-
 “ trusting their Justice, refus’d to appear: Upon which,
 “ this sham Council proceeded to depose him, and Or-
 “ dain’d one *Majorinus* in his room. But still, the greater
 “ part of the People of *Carthage* adher’d to their own
 “ Choice, as did many of the Neighbouring Clergy in
 “ *Africa*. However, the Noise and Clamour about this
 “ Matter grew at last so very loud, that it reached the
 “ Ears of the Emperor, who appointed first a Synod of
 “ Bishops at *Rome*, then another at *Arles* in *France*, to ex-
 “ amine this Matter, and try whether *Cacilian* were
 “ guilty of those Crimes that were objected to him, or
 “ such as might invalidate his Ordination. By both these,
 “ he was honourably acquitted, and his Title recogniz’d
 “ by the Imperial Court, and all the famous Churches of
 “ *Asia* and *Europe*. This is that inrag’d the Faction of *Ma-*
 “ *majorinus* to such a strange Degree, that they renounced
 “ Communion with all those Foreign Churches, and con-
 “ fin’d the Catholick Church to their own Party, and such
 “ as did approve of their wild Actions”.

FROM this Account it appears, That *Majorinus* and
 his Faction, left the *Catholick* Church, and confin’d it to
 themselves, upon a Pique at their Disappointment in a
 Preferment; and upon the Pretence, that *Cacilian* and his
 Ordainer were both *Traditors*; and that all the Bishops and
 Churches were vile, in favouring such Men; and therefore
 unfit to be communicated with. To point where this
 bears hard, needs not, I suppose, a particular Applica-
 tion: But how does this come to our Case? We don’t
 renounce Communion with any, who have the *pure Word*
 of *God* preach’d, the *Sacraments* duly administer’d according to
Christ’s Ordinance, &c. They pretended to no other Order
 of Ministers, &c. but only to a greater Holiness; and yet
 would reordain and rebaptize all that came over to them:
 whereas we acknowledge all that are ordain’d and bap-
 tiz’d

tiz'd by a *lawful* Minister, tho' they come from the Quarter of *Schismatics*.

IN the 7th Section, we are told, *That this New Doctrine has a Tendency to weaken the Protestant Succession, as by Law establish'd, in the House of Hanover.* Why so? Because they could not have any more than a Presbyterian Baptism. And I say, they might not have as much, but only Baptism by a *Lay-man*, or *Woman*; the Validity of both which, Mr. *Withers* denies: And will he offer to advance any Doctrine which tends to weaken the Protestant Succession? I wish this Doctrine has not been espoused in Print by Mr. *Withers*, to alienate Mens Minds from a Protestant Successor, and to reconcile them to a Popish Pretender. But now I think of it, not only the *Elect*or of *Hanover* might be Baptiz'd by a confess'd *Lay-man*, or *Woman*, but the Pretender too; for in both Churches such Baptism is allow'd, and in the Church of *Rome* commanded: So that 'tis a foolish and malicious Cant to say, *These Notions have been espous'd with so much Zeal, to draw Mens Minds from a Protestant Successor, and reconcile them to the Pretender*; since his Baptism is as precarious and uncertain, if not more, than that of the other. But supposing it was certain, that the Pretender was validly Baptiz'd, and the other not; must we give up what we are perswaded is Truth, for the sake of that great PERSONAGE, on whom the CROWN is entail'd? No! not if my Queen was involv'd in the same unhappy Circumstances; my QUEEN, I say, whom I honour, and would serve at the Expence of all but my Soul.

IN the 8th Section, we are told, *That the greatest Mischief of all, is, that the Practice of these Gentlemen renders every Man's Christianity precarious, and absolutely uncertain.* Now I would ask this Question, If Mr. *Withers* his Notion of Lay-baptism being invalid, prevails; whether we are not all alike left to the uncovenanted Mercies of God; at least, that no Man living, can have any Assurance to the contrary? After all that we have done, or can do, we must live in Uncertainties, and be haunted with perplexing Doubts.

Which I thus prove: There are, or have been, amongst the Dissenting Teachers, many who have had no other than Lay-baptism. Now, if these are no Christians, 'tis impossible they should be Christian Priests. Their Administrations are all Nullities: And all those who have been either mediately, or immediately Baptiz'd by such, must be excluded the Gospel Covenant. Before I can know my self a Christian, I must be sure, that the Priest who Baptiz'd me, had himself a Presbyterian Baptism: I must have the same Certainty in relation to his Baptizer, and so of all his Predecessors, up to the Apostles themselves. If there be but one broken Link, it renders the whole Chain useless. Is there any one Man among the Dissenters, or upon Earth, who can pretend to such a Certainty as this? And can Mr. Withers and his Friends have any other than an uncertain Title to the Christian Name? You see, Sir, into what a Labyrinth Mr. Withers has brought himself and his Friends; nor can he and they be disengag'd, but by renouncing their extravagant Principles.

MR. Withers says, "That the Author of Lay-Baptism is Invalid, being sensible of this Difficulty, lying in his way, undertakes to remove it, by pretending, that Baptism in a Gospel Minister, is only a personal Qualification, as Temperance, Humility, &c. Other Virtues are necessary indeed, in relation to himself, to recommend him to God's Favour; but that nothing is requisite to render his Administration valid in relation to others, save only that he has a lawful Commission". I own this is Mr. Laurence's Assertion: But since Mr. Withers has not thought fit to quote the Sum and Substance of his Argument, I shall do it for him at large.

"* Christian Baptism is certainly a Personal Qualification for Holy Orders; and that it is no more than a Personal One, I infer from hence, because all Christians are equally bound to be Baptiz'd, Ministers as well as People; and it cannot be prov'd that it is more the Duty of the one than of the other, to be Baptiz'd. If it be said, yes it is, because there must of Necessity be a Christian Minister, before there can be a Baptized Lay-man. This
" is

is not deny'd : It is certainly true there must be so : But it does not therefore follow that he is not a Christian Minister, if he is unbaptiz'd ; for 'tis not his Baptism, but the Commission, that makes him a Christian Minister, or *one set apart to Minister in the Divine Offices of the Christian Religion.* His being Baptiz'd, is not *his Commission* ; for, if it is, then all Baptiz'd Persons are, as such *Commission'd Officers* of the Church ; and so there is no need of any other Ordination, which is absurd, and contrary to the Principles upon which this Objection is rais'd. Again, his being Baptiz'd, is no instituted *essential part of his Commission* ; for, if it be, then all Baptiz'd Persons, as such, have one instituted *essential part of a Commission*, tho' not a whole *Commission* ; which is also absurd, because a Commission is but *one thing*, and the essential parts thereof cannot be separated without Violence and Destruction to the whole ; and therefore all Baptiz'd Persons, if they have *one essential part of a Commission*, must have the whole ; which brings us back to the first Absurdity : And consequently Baptism it self, being no constituent essential part of his Commission or Ordination, he who is destitute of Baptism, is not, by reason of that *Want alone*, destitute of Holy Orders. If it be objected, that while he is unbaptiz'd, he is out of the Church : And how can he, who is not of the Church, admit another by Baptism into the Church ? I answer, Tho' he is out of the Church with respect to any Benefits to himself, yet not with respect to the Spiritual Benefits, he has Authority and Commission *mediately* to convey to others : For, a Man may be a true Messenger to carry that Good to another, which he himself neither does, nor ever will enjoy. A Master of a Family may send a Neighbour, or a Stranger, who is not of his Family, and give him full Power and Authority to adopt and enter into his Family, some poor, destitute, Orphan Children, whom he commiserates. And tho' that Stranger be not of the Family himself, yet his adopting those poor Children into that Family, stands good, because the Master of the Family *sent and empower'd* him to do it. And this I take to be very parallel to the Case in
“ Hand

“ Hand : And therefore, he who is not of the Church, be-
“ cause unbaptiz’d, may *as truly* admit a Person into the
“ Church by Baptism, as he who (tho’ Baptiz’d) thro’ his
“ Wickedness, is destitute of the Holy Ghost, can convey
“ the Gift of the Holy Ghost by his Ministration of Sa-
“ craments, to others : For, as ’tis not the *Personal Holi-*
“ *ness* of the Administrator, that conveys Holiness to me
“ in the Ministration of any Sacrament ; so neither does
“ his having *receiv’d* that Sacrament, signify any thing to
“ me for the Validity thereof, when he administers it to
“ me by *Virtue of a Divine Commission explicitly given to him.*
“ This *Commission alone*, is that which makes the Mini-
“ stration not his, but God’s own Act ; and as such (*with-*
“ *out any other appendant Cause*) ’tis good and valid.
“ Hence our blessed Lord call’d both unbaptiz’d and un-
“ holy Men, *viz.* his Apostles, who cannot be prov’d to
“ *have been Baptiz’d in the Name of the Trinity* before his Re-
“ surrection ; and one of them, *Judas Iscariot*, a Thief,
“ a Devil in his Disposition, to the Administration of Holy
“ things ; as if he would thereby teach us, to look with
“ Faith on *his Authority only*, without confiding in any of
“ the best Accomplishments of those on whom he has con-
“ ferr’d it. And if we do but look back to the Condition
“ of the *Jewish Church*, during their forty Years sojourn-
“ ing in the Wilderness, we shall find, that none of them
“ were Circumcis’d in all that Space of time ; and tho’
“ the Uncircumcis’d was by God’s own Appointment to
“ *be cut off from among his People* ; yet the Ministry of those
“ Priests and Levites, who were born in the Term of those
“ forty Years, was not null’d and made void for their
“ want of Circumcision ; which doubtless was as much
“ necessary to qualify them for Holy Orders, as Baptism
“ is now to qualify our Christian Priests ”.

I N Answer to which we are told, *That an Officer must*
not only have a Commission, but that the Subject be capable of
being invested with it. And to this Purpose we have our
Saviour’s Commission produc’d, and remark’d upon thus ;
The Apostles were oblig’d, first to Teach and Baptize, and then
to take care for the Perpetuating their Succession : For, [Lo, I
am with you (says our Saviour) to the end of the World:]

with

with your Persons whilst living, to assist and bless you, and with those who being taught and baptiz'd, shall succeed you in the Ministerial Function. In the next place, he refers us to the two Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy; Which Sacred Records (says he) may not improperly be still'd those credential Letters, by which the Embassadors of the Prince of Peace are to govern themselves in the Execution of their Office. 'Tis expressly said, (1 Tim. 3. 6.) That a Minister must not be a Novice, one lately Baptiz'd: And (2 Tim. 2. 2.) Timothy is enjoyn'd by St. Paul, to commit the things that he had heard of him, to faithful Men, who (he says) were call'd by no other Names in the early times of Christianity, before Baptism, than those of Catechumens and Candidates: And the Apostles and Primitive Church constantly observ'd that Method of Ordaining those only, who were Baptiz'd, and in full Communion with the Church.

NOW, to this I say, that I believe that 'twas our blessed Saviour's Design, the Apostles should not only commission Baptiz'd Persons, but the best Christians; and that a Novice in the Greek Word, signifies one newly planted; and in Scripture Language, one newly born of Water and the Spirit, i. e. Baptized; and that by Faithful, was for the most part mean't those who were Baptiz'd, and in full Communion with the Church; and that the Apostles, and the most Primitive Church, by what appears, never knowingly practis'd otherwise: But what then? Because our SAVIOUR directs the Apostles on whom they should confer Ordination; and the Apostles directed others in the same manner, and gave an unexceptionable Example in the same Case; does it follow, that whatever an Officer does otherwise, is null? Because an Officer should ordain the best Men, must the Ordination be null and void, if, thro' Ignorance or Carelesness, he should ordain some who were criminal in their Opinions and Practices? And since he has quoted 1 Tim. 3. I desire that you would consider that Chapter, from the first Verse to the 14th; for there we are inform'd of the several Virtues a Bishop and a Deacon must be furnish'd with; and the ill Consequences that will probably happen, if they are not. Now being a Novice, is reckon'd among the rest of the

Personal

Personal Qualifications ; and why this should not be a *personal Qualification* too, I cannot see any Reason.

BUT that I may make this plain, I shall give a Paraphrase on three or four Verses. The Apostle says, *Not a Novice, lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil, (Verse 6.)* Not one but newly instructed in the Faith, and receiv'd into the Church, least so great a Dignity, so suddenly bestowed on him, may tempt him to Pride and Vanity ; and by that means bring the same Ruin upon him, as betel the Devil. *Moreover, he must have a good Report of them which are without ; lest he fall into Reproach, and the Snare of the Devil. (V. 7.)* i. e. He must also be a Person of good Reputation, and under no Reproach among Unbelievers for his former Life ; for if he be, there will be Danger of his being contumeliously us'd by them : And this the Devil will make use of to ensnare others, to give them Aversions to the Doctrine of such a Man, who is under so much Scandal for his former Life. This is *Theophylact's* Interpretation. And, speaking of the Deacons, he says, *Likewise they must be grave ; not double-tongued ; not given to much Wine ; not greedy of filthy Lucre ; holding the Mystery of the Faith in a pure Conscience. (V. 8. 9.)* i. e. They must not be given to those Vices, but be Orthodox in their Faith, and live pure Christian Lives, according to the Doctrine and Directions of the Gospel. And in the next he adds *(V. 10.)* — *And let these also first be proved ; then let them use the Office of a Deacon ; being found blameless.* i. e. Before any be taken into Holy Orders, let them be well known, and by Testimony be approv'd for Sufficiency, Piety, and good Behaviour ; and then, being found blameless, Persons of good Report, let them be admitted. By this you see, that the Apostle speaks as much, if not more, against *Timothy's* Ordaining a *Vicious*, or *Heresical* Person, than a *Novice*. For, when he speaks of the *Novice*, 'tis to this Effect ; Not a *Novice*, lest the poor Man should not be able to bear it. 'Tis the Apostle's Kindness to the Persons of that Character, that puts him upon dehorting *Timothy* from Ordaining any of them ; for they being but lately come from *Heathenism*, and admitted into the *Christian Church*, 'twas likely many of them,

them, if they had been promoted to the Ministerial Office so soon, would not have been able to keep themselves within the Bounds of Humility; and so would have exposed themselves to the just Indignation of GOD. And 'tis observable, that as in the 2d Verse, the Apostle says, *A Bishop must be blameless*; or, according to the Greek Word, *It is fit and necessary that a Bishop be blameless*, &c. so at the 7th Verse, which concludes the Directions for making a *Bishop*, he uses the same enforcing Word. A plain Intimation, that the Apostle thought a good Conversation a *necessary* Qualification; and that *Heresy* and an *evil* Life, unfitted a Man for Orders more than any thing else. 'Tis no less observable, that after the Apostle had said, that the Deacons must be *grave*, and be free from such and such Vices; and that they should be Orthodox in their Faith, and Holy in their Lives; he charges *Timothy* in this manner, *And let these also first be proved, and then let them use the Office of a Deacon, being found blameless*. (V. 10.) In short then, *Timothy* was not to ordain a *Novice*, for fear his Exaltation should make him proud, and endanger his Salvation: And he was not to ordain *any*, but *those* who were reputed to *have been*, and to be Orthodox in their Faith, and pure in their Lives, lest *Infidels* should be harden'd and prejudic'd against Christianity, and *Christians* infected and misled. We must not overlook Mr. *Withers's* Words: If *Timothy* (says he) was forbidden to lay Hands upon one but lately baptiz'd, we may well argue a Fortiori, that he could have no Commission to ordain a Person who never was Baptiz'd at all. I shall observe by the way, that *Timothy* was forbid only to lay Hands on such an one, in order to make him a Bishop; and for this Reason, that a place of such Honour and Authority in the Church, might be a Snare to him, and occasion his Ruin: For a Baptiz'd Person, according to Mr. *Withers*, might, without any Absurdity, have been made a Christian Priest or Bishop: So that when he says, *Timothy was forbidden to lay Hands on one lately Baptiz'd*; he only means, that *Timothy* would have transgressed the Apostles Directions, and been much to blame, if he had made such an one a Bishop: And therefore when he says, *He could have no Commission to ordain a Person who never*

was Baptiz'd, he can only consistently mean, that he would, if he did so, transgress the Apostles Orders, and be guilty of doing what he forbid: For a *Fortiori*, we may conclude. that if the Apostle would not have a Person lately Baptiz'd, he would not have a Person unbaptiz'd, or a Catechumen made a Bishop. But if Mr. Withers thinks that a Person lately Baptiz'd, and consequently a Person unbaptiz'd, could not have been validly ordain'd, when the Prohibition of the Apostle was in Force against him; then a Person who had not been Blameless, or Orthodox in the Faith, and pure in his whole Conversation, was also incapable of a valid Ordination: For if he was commanded by the Apostle to ordain such as were unblamable, sound in their Faith, and pure in their Conversations; then we may conclude, that he had no Commission to ordain such as could not answer that Character. And supposing that Timothy made diligent Enquiry, and had receiv'd a good Character of them, and so ordain'd them; yet 'tis possible there might be Partiality in the Account that he had, and the Persons not be what they were represented. It may be reply'd, *that's nothing to the Purpose*: I think very much, since 'tis not the Ordainer's knowing the Person to be lately Baptiz'd, or Unbaptiz'd; Heretical, or Wicked; but the Persons being either, tho' unknown, that makes the Ordination null; for, according to this Scheme, a Person lately, or never Baptiz'd, and, as I have shewn too, a Person that is, or has been corrupt in the Faith, and in his Conversation, is an *uncapable Subject*, and wants an indispensable Qualification; and therefore, if Timothy, or any other Officer, had laid Hands on a Person who had any one of these Defects, tho' not known at that time, there would have been no Power or Commission conferr'd; and consequently all the Ministrations of such a Person were wholly ineffectual: And how could the Ordainers be sure they never ordain'd such a Person? And how could the People be sure they had not, at some times, such a Minister?

BUT, to disprove this Notion effectually, we had need only consider, (1 Tim. 5. 21, 22.) *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou*

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serve these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by Partiality. Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, neither be Partaker of other Mens Sins: Keep thy self pure. In this Chapter, he gives Rules for reproving the Elders; and in the Verses I have quoted, he advises Timothy to be impartial, and no Respector of Persons; but to reprove all that deserv'd a Reproof, and to defer ordaining every Man before he had full Proof of him; and so by that Means, to preserve himself pure, or free from partaking of other Mens Sins. This is a natural, and the common Interpretation. Now, how could St. Paul charge Timothy to lay Hands suddenly on no Man? But upon this Consideration, that whatever the Person might be, he was, upon the laying on of his Hands, validly Ordain'd, and become a lawful Minister: And how could he say, Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, upon the Motive of being not Partaker of the Sins of the Ordained? But with this View, that the Persons might not be well qualify'd; and so might, by such an Office, do Mischief to themselves and others, and to Religion in general; which would reflect both Dishonour and Guilt upon the heedless Ordainer. But if the Apostle, or Timothy, and Others, knew, that the Persons of the foremention'd Defects could not validly minister in the Church; then this Caution of the Apostle was needless: And if Timothy had lain on Hands suddenly, he would only have been guilty of doing nothing, or trifling; the Person he laid his Hands on, being not qualify'd to receive a Commission: And if the Person had acted Ministerially, he alone, and not Timothy, would have been to blame for any after Mischiefs; because Timothy ordain'd him upon the Supposition he was so, and so qualify'd; which he, knowing himself not to be (if this Notion then prevail'd) could not execute any part of the Ministerial Office, without incurring the heavy Charge of running unsent. We conclude therefore, that the Apostles Charge to Timothy meant, that he should wait awhile, and prove Men as much as possible, before he ordain'd them; lest, thro' his Carelessness, some Men should creep into the Ministry, who might be imperious, erroneous, and vicious. And if he was careful in that Matter, to the utmost of his Power, tho' some Men should escape his Notice, and

be admitted to Holy Orders, who were ill and unprepar'd; yet he should be acquitted as Innocent. In short, the Apostles and their Successors, took particular care in conferring Orders; but we cannot suppose, that none *unbaptiz'd, heretical, or vicious*, were ever ordain'd. And I cannot learn, that any were ever question'd the *Validity* of their Orders, upon any Pretence, but the not receiving it from a *lawful Hand*, and in a *due Form*.

MR. *Withers* says, that the Ordaining one who had a *Clinick Baptism*, made a great Noise, and was opposed as *unlawful*; and consequently, that it *could not have been thought lawful to ordain him who had no Baptism at all*. I allow the Matter of Fact; but the most that it amounts to, can be no more than this; *viz.* that it would have been scandalous for the Bishop to have done a thing so generally condemn'd; and that therefore the Clergy endeavour'd to prevent it. But all this does not in the least imply, that if the Bishop had done it, that the Ordination would be invalid: For the same Man who occasion'd so great a Tumult, was after all ordain'd; and no one ever disputed the *Validity* of his Ordination, when 'twas confer'd, tho' they oppos'd the doing it as unlawful. The *Caveat* in another place says, that *Nectarius* and St. *Ambrose* were chosen by a general Voice *before*, tho' they were not consecrated till *after* they were regularly baptiz'd. From which I thus argue: If one was ordain'd, whose Ordination was opposed as unlawful, and two more were chosen by the whole Church *before*, and consecrated immediately *after* Baptism; then the *Primitive Church* did not think the Ordination of a Person baptiz'd upon his *sick Bed*, or of a *Novice*, to be *invalid*, but only unjustifiable, except in some extraordinary Cases. The Fact Mr. *Withers* himself assures us of, and the Consequence naturally flows from it.

BUT to pass on: He says, That Mr. *Laurence* instances St. *Paul* for being validly ordain'd before Baptism—. To which he replies, That the Question is not whether Christ may give Authority to an unbaptiz'd Person to administer the Sacraments; but whether the ordinary Pastors of the Church may do it. And he concludes the Paragraph, with saying, That an extraordinary Act of Christ himself, is no Rule for

the inferior Officers to measure their Authority by. 'Tis very true, that an extraordinary Act of Christ, ought not to be imitated by his Officers: But, supposing they should do such a thing thro' Ignorance or Presumption, how can it be prov'd not to hold good? I say, if our Saviour does any thing of this kind, his Officers may; tho' it must be confess'd, that our Saviour acts as a *SOVEREIGN*, and they as *COMMISSIONERS*, who are accountable for all their Managements. Our Saviour sent the Apostles with almost the same Power that he exercised upon Earth; as any one, that will take the Pains to consider the several Passages relating to that Matter, may see. And the Apostles, when they were leaving the *World*, in Imitation of their *Master*, committed the same Power that they had received, to other Men. And can it be suppos'd, since our Lord will not appear till the End of the *World*, that the Irregularities of the Governours of the Church, shall all be null? That whatever is not strictly well and agreeable to the Directions of our Saviour and his Apostles, shall signify nothing, and be as vain as any thing done by an uncommission'd Person? It cannot be: Whatever is done by a Person commission'd, will certainly stand firm, and the Congregation of Christians be unhurt, by the irregular and preposterous Mission; tho' the careless Steward, without Repentance, and better Care of the Family and Household of Faith, shall be severely punish'd. I have this more in the present Case to add, *viz.* That ordaining an unbaptiz'd Person, must be absurd, or not: If it be not absurd, that a Man may minister in the Church, and at the same time not be of the Church; then, if such an one be ordain'd, the Ordination is *good*, whatever Guilt the Ordainer, by knowingly doing it, may contract. But if there be an Absurdity and Contradiction in it, then our Saviour is necessarily limited; and with all his Authority, as *HEAD* of the Church, he can do nothing in such a Case: For, as our blessed Lord cannot sin, so he cannot pronounce, or do a thing, inconsistent and absurd. But our Lord has commission'd an unbaptiz'd Person; therefore the thing is practicable, and such an one is capable of receiving a valid Ordination, and ministring valid Sacraments. But he

says,

says, *Whatever St. Paul might have done, 'tis certain, that he did not exercise any part of his Function before Baptism. And in this Case (he adds) it seems, that the Apostle had no Commission to discharge the one, till he had complied with the other.* 'Tis no matter whether he executed it or not: And to say, *It seems he had no Commission to Preach, before he was Baptiz'd,* is to say what is false; for 'tis express that he was commission'd before: Therefore, to speak impartially and truly, he should have said, *It seems, that he did not preach, and that he had no Opportunity to preach, before he was Baptiz'd.* But since Mr. Laurence has been mention'd, I shall quote his own Words upon the Instance of St. Paul.

SECT. 39. " St. Paul, * 'tis certain, was validly
 " Ordain'd, before he was Baptiz'd: He, indeed (as all
 " other Men ought to be) was Baptiz'd for his own Per-
 " sonal Benefit, that *his Sins might be wash'd away.* Ananias
 " gave him *that*, for the reason of his being baptiz'd;
 " and we hear of nothing, either in that History, or any
 " other part of the sacred Canon, that Baptism was re-
 " quir'd to make a Commission valid. I call St. Paul's Or-
 " dination valid, even before he was baptiz'd; because his
 " being baptiz'd does not appear to be any *Act of Ordina-*
 " *tion*: And tho' he executed not his Commission 'till after
 " his Baptism, yet, when he did execute it, he did it
 " by Virtue of that Commission which he had receiv'd
 " before Baptism. For, we find him executing his Office
 " without any *new Ordination*; which, doubtless, he must
 " not have done, if his first Ordination had been a Nullity
 " for want of a previous Baptism—— Either it was
 " null before, or it was *valid*: If it was null, then how
 " could his After-Baptism give it Validity? *i. e.* How
 " could Baptism alone give a Commission to him, who had
 " none before? Not at all; if it was valid before, then
 " what could his After-Baptism add to it, as to its Essence?
 " Nothing, certainly. So that all that can be inferr'd
 " from St. Paul's receiving Baptism as soon as possible, af-
 " ter he had receiv'd his Commission, is, that 'tis Indeco-
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* B. shop of Oxford's Charge consider'd, p. 60 to 62.

rous and Unbecoming ; nay, Wicked too ; for a Minister of Christ to neglect and disregard that Baptism, which he is bound by his Commission to press upon others Consciences, as necessary to their Salvation : That 'tis as necessary for his own Salvation to receive that Sacrament, as 'tis for their Salvation, that they should receive it ; and that his Commission will not entitle him to be sav'd, by Virtue thereof, but he must submit to, and perform the same Injunctions, which God has empower'd him to lay on others, &c.

HE adds, *That if the Instance of St. Paul be apply'd to common Cases, it will ruin that very Cause, for the support of which it is produc'd.* For St. Paul had a Commission to Preach and Administer the Sacraments, without the Imposition of an Apostle's, or a Bishop's Hand ; therefore so may others too. I defy that Gentleman (I find he will not leave off defying Gentlemen) to give any tolerable Reason, why my Inference is not as good as his. Allowing this Inference, yet it does him no Service ; for all that can be made of the matter will only come to this : Our Saviour Commission'd St. Paul before his Baptism, and without the Imposition of his own, or an Apostle's Hands ; therefore a Bishop may Commission a Person unbaptiz'd, and without the Imposition of his own Hands, or the Hands of one of his own Order. But it does not follow upon this Supposition, that any one can Lawfully Minister without the Bishop's Commission and Authority. But to conclude ; I have offer'd several things to prove the *Validity* of a Commission to an unbaptiz'd Person ; and what I think will hold. But after all ; if it be a Truth, that every unbaptiz'd Person is incapable of Ordination ; and that if he should Minister, all his Ministrations would be null ; then let us with all our Skill and Might, plead for and defend it. But what will Mr. Withers and his Friends, who so much regard Consequences, get by it ? For then the Reform'd, and all the World, may be no Christians, since they have probably been baptiz'd by Ministers not validly baptiz'd themselves ; or by those who deriv'd their Authority from an unbaptiz'd Minister ; and who can be sure he has not ? And how many may be sure that they have done it ?

IN the Ninth Section we are told, that this our *Practice is an Indignity to our Diocesan, and a publick Arraigning of his Lordship's Conduct.* And he says, that he hath heard, that his Lordship should tell me, that if I was satisfy'd with my Baptism, he would immediately Confirm me; if not, he would order me to be baptiz'd by a Lawful Minister; yea, that he would have honour'd the new Convert so far, as to Officiate himself, had there been a Font in his private Chapel. I'm sure, I never said his Lordship told me, he would confirm me immediately, if I was satisfy'd in my Baptism; for I never was with my Lord, 'till I declar'd my Opinion for being (as he calls it) rebaptiz'd. I, or my Friends, may have said, that 'twas unlikely I should have any Interest in being Baptiz'd, since, very probably, I might have been confirm'd among the others (who came for that end) without it, the Bishop not being made acquainted with my particular Case. And will he question, Whether a Bishop may not lawfully use the Form of Confirmation, upon the Supposition of a Person's being Baptiz'd by an *Episcopally Ordained*, tho' *Dissenting* Minister? That my Lord appointed the Minister, and would have done it himself, if he had had a Font in his private Chapel, is true: But how can Mr. *Withers* publish to the World, that we are abusive to our Diocesan, when we follow his Directions, and move with his Consent and Authority? It is *he* who has offered an Indignity, and arraign'd his Lordship's Conduct, by taking up a Report, without rightly examining the Truth of every part of it, and by drawing out his indecent Reflections upon it. But the Design was to ridicule his Lordship, and to paint us as black as he could; and therefore no matter whether the Story was true or false? But what if I should say, that his Lordship did not determine the Controversy, but order'd me to be Baptiz'd by the Conditional Form? This, I suppose, would be thought to strike at the Foundation of Mr. *Withers* his *CAVEAT*, and quite demolish it. Well then, 'tis Truth; and notorious, that his Lordship's Order was punctually observ'd.

IT will be needless to say any thing to the Articles of his Charge against my Lord, but to that one of his being

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no Christian; since they are the same as have been sufficiently answer'd already. I shall therefore endeavour to clear up his Lordship's Christianity, which Mr. *Withers* fears we have robb'd him of; tho', by the By, he seems to be more afraid, lest his *highly Probable* should be proved an *high Improbability*.

HE says, that his Lordship was born in the Parish of *St. Gregory's*, near *St. Paul's*, *London*, in *April*, 1655; and that his Name may be found upon the Parish Records as Baptiz'd in that Month. This is true; and I can inform him for certain, that he was Baptiz'd the 26th of *April*, in that Year. He owns, that he cannot name the Man who officiated on that Occasion: But it being in the Height of the *Usurper's* Greatness; and Dr. *Heylin* saying, that the Episcopal Minister of *St. Gregory's*, was sequestred, with many others; and it being hardly to be suppos'd, that he should be restor'd again during *Oliver's* Administration; and the *London* Pulpits being generally fill'd with Presbyterian or Independent Ministers; he leaves it to his Friend, whether it is not, at least, *highly probable*, that his Lordship had no other Baptism than I was induc'd to renounce as absolutely null.

NOW, to this I say, that tho' the Episcopal, or Loyal Minister, was sequestred, with many others, and was never restor'd, and only Presbyterians and Independents fill'd the *London* Pulpits; yet it proves nothing: For tho' the Loyal Ministers were call'd Episcopal, yet 'tis well known, most of those Presbyterians and Independents, who fill'd the *London* Pulpits, were Episcopal in their Ordination, and Presbyterian and Independent, only as to their Principles or Profession. So, that tho' it should be granted, that his Lordship was baptiz'd by one of them, he was notwithstanding *validly* baptiz'd. But I doubt not to give such Evidence, as will satisfy an unprejudiced Mind, that my Lord was baptized by an *Episcopal* Divine, who never fell in with the Times: For I have this Account well attested from the *Parish* (which, if required, I shall be ready to produce) that during the Remainder of the *Usurpation*, after 1651, (in which Year the Church was rebuilt and finished) the *Liturgy* was continually us'd, and the

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Sacrament celebrated, at *St. Gregory's*, according to the Rites of the Church of *England*; which is thought to have occasioned those many Changes in its Ministers that appear on the Parish Books: All which were known to be Orthodox and Episcopal Divines, and Men of Character and Figure in the Church: Particularly *Dr. Gillingham*, who was Chaplain to the King, and known by several Persons now living, to be a Man of great Worth: In whose time Bishop *Blackall* was born; or else in the time of *Dr. Hewet*, who succeeded him, and was afterwards beheaded in 1658. Now let *Mr. Withers* take which he will of them, and the Controversy in this Particular, will be at an end. But before I leave this Matter, I shall present you with a few Things from my Lord *Clarendon* and others, for the Confirmation of it. If you consult my Lord *Clarendon's* History, you'll find this remarkable Passage: '*Dr. Hewet* *, an eminent Preacher in *London*, and very Orthodox, to whose Church those of the King's Party frequently resorted, and few but those'. And in the same Volume, he gives this short Account of him; '*Dr. Hewet* was born a Gentleman, and bred a Scholar, and was a *Divine* before the Beginning of the Troubles. He lived in *Oxford*, and in the Army, till the end of the War; and continued afterwards to preach with great Applause, in a little Church in *London*; where, by the Affection of the Parish, he was admitted, since he was enough known to be notoriously under the Brand of Malignity. When the Lord *Falconbridge* married *Cromwell's* Daughter (who had used secretly to frequent his Church) after the Ceremony of the time, he was made choice of to marry them according to the Order of the Church; which engag'd both that Lord and Lady, to use their utmost Credit with the Protector to preserve his Life; but he was inexorable, and desirous that the Church-men, upon whom he look'd as his mortal Enemies, should see what they were to trust to, if they stood in need of his Mercy'. You see Sir, that few but the *KING's* Party resorted to this little Church: That this *Dr. Hewet* was a notorious Malignant, or Loyalist;

* *Id. Clarendon*, Vol. III. Part 2. p. 620. Octavo.

list; was admitted by the Affection of the Parish; and married *Cromwell's* Daughter to my Lord *Falconbridge* (tho' they had been married the Presbyterian or Independent Way before) according to the Form in the Liturgy of the Church of *England*. I observe farther, that this Dr. *Hewer*, according to *Heath's* and *Baker's* Chronicles, was Minister of *St. Gregory's* in the Year, and at the same time that he was seized on, and committed to Custody. Compare this Chronicle with my Lord *Clarendon's* Account, and to me it seems evident, that he was Minister of that Parish several Years; tho' it is not to be doubted, but that many sequestred and distressed Loyalists preached there at the same time. In short, all the Accounts amount to thus much, that whatever the Malice of the Times was, *St. Gregory's* never fail'd of one, or more Loyalists, to serve it. I shall only add, that some now living, remember, that the Cloak was used in all other Churches, but this: And it cannot be suppos'd, that any Presbyterians, or Independents, should use the Gown in this Church, at that time, when the Cloak was so universal and courtly. Now, what can be an Evidence, that Episcopal Baptisms, even in the high Sense of the Word, were continually administred in this Church, if all this be denied to be sufficient?

HE says farther, That the Practice of these Gentlemen is an Affront to the University of *Oxford*. The Proof of this, is taken from an Epistle sent to *Geneva*; in which he says, 'tis expressly owned, that the Citizens of *Geneva* are a Church, and have valid Sacraments among them. The true State of the Case is, that they thus expressed themselves upon their Plea of an unavoidable Necessity; which Necessity has been reckon'd by many great Men, to have made those Ministers and Sacraments, lawful and effectual; which, without that Necessity, they could not be. I shall not offer any thing for or against the Notion; but leave the Reader to judge of the Sentiments of the University of *Oxford*, in this Matter, when I have told him, that the very last Summer, they presented Mr. *Laurence* with the Degree of Master of Arts; a shrewd Token of their being affronted at what Mr. *Wishers* calls *Rebaptizing*. I honour that learned Body of Men,

and would be determined by them sooner than by any ; but I must not cross my Convictions, at least not in a Case of so great Importance, to shew my Esteem and Veneration. In short, the University, even in that Letter, have condemn'd the *English* Presbyterians : And I cannot discover any such Connection and Affinity, that whoever owns the *Foreign* Presbyterian Ministers and Sacraments, must necessarily allow those *at Home*.

WE are come now to the Paragraph which wholly concerns Mr. *Walker* : And in return to it, I had prepar'd a Vindication of that injur'd Gentleman ; but he utterly refuseth to let any thing of that kind be printed ; and says, that my being baptized by the *Conditional Form*, is a thorough Answer to the whole *CAVEAT*, and more particularly to this Paragraph of it.

BUT he mentions one thing more, namely, that Mrs. *Snell*, who stood as my God-mother, was Baptized by a Dissenting Minister : And that the Clergy-men could not be ignorant of this ; for she attended constantly at a *Presbyterian Meeting*, before her Marriage, in the City of *EXON*. Is not this fine Arguing ? She went to a Meeting ; therefore the Clergy-men could not but know, that she was baptized by a Dissenting Minister : As if it was not possible to instance in many, who were born and bred in Church Families, and yet were afterward zealous Dissenters. But to bring this Matter to a short Issue : I have made the best Enquiry I was able, and cannot find out that Gentlewoman's Baptizer. However, I am assur'd, that Mr. *Wyat*, her Father, was a Church-man, till he married his first Wife, who seduc'd him, and by that Means created an Uneasiness among his Relations, who were always in the Interest and Communion of the Church. By this Wife he had two Children, who were baptized by the Church Minister, notwithstanding the Importunities and Resentments of his Wife upon that Account ; which proves, that even then he retained an Affection for the Church. By a second Wife he had Mrs. *Snell* ; but she was born within those Years, that the Incumbent of that Parish was so careless, as not to register either *Christenings*, *Marriages* or *Burials* ; and only a few of them were recovered by his Successor, and written

own with his own Hand. By a third Wife, and his last, he had another Child, which was also baptized according to the Form of the Church of England: And if the Issue he had by the first (tho' a strong Dissenter) and last Wife, was so baptized, is it not a greater almost Demonstration than any Mr. Withers has given, that Mrs. Snell, who was born under the second Marriage, was also baptized the same way? If the Silence of the Register be a Proof to the contrary, it is a Proof likewise, that the Minister of the Parish, during all that Term of Years, never baptized, married nor buried any; the Absurdity and Falsity of which, every Body must observe. But, for Argument's Sake, granting all this to be a Sham, and that she was baptized by a Dissenting Minister; yet Mrs. Batt of this City, says, that her Father (who lived and preached at Wellington, and was always very intimate with Mr. Wyat, who lived but at a small distance from that place) most probably did it; and that he was proved, upon a Dispute about a Couple which he married, to have been Episcopally ordained. But granting this to be a Sham too; yet I cannot see the Oddness of this Circumstance in our Affair, since she was not, strictly speaking, a Sponsor, or Surety, but only a Witness to what I answered or promised; which any one (at least of the virtuous and pious Catechumens) might be. In the Office for Infants, the Sureties answer; but in the Office for those of Riper Years, the Persons to be baptized answer and promise for themselves, and the Godfathers and Godmothers are only Witnesses. It may be ask'd then, what use are they of? A great deal; in as much as by appearing once under that Character, they will, according to the Exhortation in the same Office (if they are virtuous and pious) think, and shew themselves more concern'd for the Person's Welfare, than others. And 'tis very likely, their Advice will have the Force of a Command, upon those of them, who have any Sense of Gratitude and Religion left; and that they will prevail with ease, where others have endeavour'd long in vain.

THUS, Sir, I have given you a few Reflections upon the CAVEAT: And I doubt not, you find as great a Defect of Charity, as Reason and Honesty in the whole Procedure of

of it. His Design, I suppose, was to make us, and the Church odious: And in order hereunto, he hath, in his own harsh Sense, paganized all the Foreign Protestants; sapp'd the Foundations of his own Church; render'd every Man's Christianity precarious; and trifled with the most sacred Things. And is this to act like one who pretends to serve a God that cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked? Is this to act like one (who would be thought) an Ambassador of the Prince of Peace, and a Successor to the Apostles, who have given us in Charge, that nothing should be done thro' Strife and vain Glory.

I heartily pray the God of all Grace, to look down with Pity upon declining Religion; and pour forth upon all its Professors, a Spirit of Love, of Peace, and of a sound Mind. I cannot conclude better at present (and I leave the World to judge, whether the Conclusion does not as well become me, as Mr. Withers) than with the Collect appointed by the Church of England, to be read upon the Sunday before Lent—*O Lord, who hast taught us, that all our Doings, without Charity, are nothing worth, send thy Holy Spirit, and pour into our Hearts that most excellent Gift of Charity, the very Bond of Peace, and of all Virtues; without which, whosoever liveth, is counted dead before thee: Grant this, for thine only Son Jesus Christ's Sake. Amen.*



Post-

Postscript.

I Might have likewise added a few Reflections upon some other Passages in the *CAVEAT*; which would, I believe, have made it appear yet more trifling and uncharitable. But I chose rather to answer in a plain way, without offering at Rallery or ill Language. I must further say, that I am not so vain as to think, the Reply I have now made to it, is without its *Weaknesses* and *Mistakes*; none of which would have appeared, had I been assisted in drawing up this *Letter*, or been favoured only with a *common Revisal*. And this I the rather mention, that some Men of Merit and Dignity (to whom the *uncharitable World* has already ascribed it) may not lie under the Imputation of those Weaknesses, which I freely confess to be my own. I hope therefore, the next *CAVEAT* will not throw several Reflections, but charge home all upon me; and I promise, that those Things which I cannot honestly plead for, I'll publicly recant.

F I N I S.

Postscript.

I might have likewise added a few Reflections upon some
other Passages in the CANTAB; which would
have made it appear yet more trifling and unchar-
itable. But I chose rather to answer in a plain way,
not offering at Rallery or ill Language. I must further
add that I am not so vain as to think, the Reply I have
made to it, is without its Weaknesses and Mistakes;
of which would have appeared, had I been assisted in
drawing up this Answer, or been favoured only with a com-
miserable. And this I rather mention, that some
Merit and Dignity might be taken from the wretched World
already ascribed it. 47YT41 I am under the Imputation
of Weaknesses, which I only confess to be my own.
Therefore, the next CANTAB will not throw
Reflections, but charge home all upon me; and I
that those Things which I cannot honestly plead
publicly retract.

F I N I S

